THE CHRIST WE KNOW

A. C. GAEBELEIN

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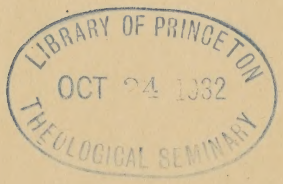

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THE CHRIST WE KNOW

Meditations on the Person and Glory
of Our Lord Jesus Christ

By

Arno Clemens Gaebelein, D.D.

The Best Answer to the Book
The Man Nobody Knows

PUBLICATION OFFICE "OUR HOPE"
456 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY

And All Booksellers

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The Bible Institute Colportage Association
of Chicago

Printed in the United States of America

Preface

FOR several months book shops have advertised as the best seller of religious works a volume with the title, *The Man Nobody Knows.* That such a production should become the best seller is far from being complimentary to the American Christian public. The book has no marked literary value nor has it a true spiritual message. Yet it has the endorsement of religious leaders of various evangelical denominations, including the President of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, Dr. S. Parkes Cadman.

The book claims to contain a new discovery concerning our blessed Lord. The writer of this book declares that our Lord was not a "kill-joy" nor a "physical weakling," but that "He was the most popular dinner guest in Jerusalem." He describes Him as the out-door man, the sociable man, a great advertiser and a great business man. More serious than all this is the fact that the author stabs, whenever he can, at the very heart of Christianity. That heart is the Cross of Christ and His substitutionary sacrifice. Take the Cross of Christ in its true meaning out of Christianity and Christianity becomes a lifeless and powerless religious system. One quotation suffices to demonstrate the denial of this great essential truth of the Gospel and how the author despises the declaration "that Christ died for our sins." On page 59 we find the following:

"Thomas Paine remarked truly that no religion can be really divine which has in it any doctrine that offends the sensibilities of a little child. Is there any reader of this page whose childish sensibilities were not shocked when the traditional explanation of the death of Jesus was first poured into his ears? Would any human father, loving his children, have sentenced all to death, and been persuaded to commute the sentence only by the suffering of his best beloved?"

But enough of this. We do not care to pass on more of these perversions of this man. The book leads us to believe that he does not know Christ at all. *The Christ we know* is a different Christ. God's people know Him as the Eternal Christ. In spite of all the modernistic infidelity which utters its miserable inventions, as the harbinger of the soon-coming night of apostasy and judgment, God's true Church still holds fast the great confession of Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

We know Him as the incarnate Son of God, the Christ who was born of the Virgin, who was cradled in Bethlehem's manger, who lived as the perfect Man a holy, sinless life on earth. We know Him as the perfect Teacher, the revealing Christ. We too cry out with Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." We know Him as the sacrificing Christ, who died for our sins, who bore our sins in His own body on the tree. What can wash away our sins? Our character? Our attempts to follow Jesus? No! Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Can the conception of Christ as a business man, as a leader, or advertiser or sociable man, give our consciences rest and bring us nigh unto God? No! Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

We know Him as the risen Christ. The book *The Man Nobody Knows* ends with a brief mention of His death, but not a word about His resurrection. True believers know that Christ arose and that they are risen with Him. We know Him as the living, the interceding Christ, in whose worthy and all-availing Name we come to God. We know that He liveth, for our prayers in His Name are answered and in sorrow, bowed down with the cares and burdens of life, we know Him as our burden-bearer, who sustains and keeps His people. We know Him as the triumphant Christ. In spite of all opposition to Him He has triumphed in every age and His greatest triumph is yet to come, when heaven opens and He returns.

This little volume, *The Christ We Know,* contains about thirty brief articles, unfolding this greatest of all themes, the Lord Jesus Christ: His Person and His Glory. These meditations are the best answers which can be given to the above mentioned "best seller."

These meditations were originally published in *Our Hope.* Years ago the writer decided to devote each month the first paragraph in the magazine to our adorable Lord. We have given Him in this way the place of preëminence. Many of these short studies were written after much prayer and soul-exercise and it has pleased the Holy Spirit to make them a blessing to thousands of members of the household of faith.

ARNO CLEMENS GAEBELEIN

Mount Vernon, N. Y.,
March 26, 1927.

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The Christ We Know

God and Man

MANY years ago there was found in Asia Minor a very old Latin inscription chiselled in marble. This inscription bears an interesting witness to the faith in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ in the first century of Christianity. It presents the eternal Word, the Son of God, bearing witness to Himself. He speaks of Himself as incarnate, the Word made flesh, and then declares: "I am what I was—*God.* I was not what I am—*Man.* I am now called both, *God and Man.*"

It is a great confession. He was and is and always will be God. He can never be anything else. When He left the Father's bosom and took on the form of a servant He did not cease to be God. He was just as much God when He was cradled in Bethlehem as He was God before the foundation of the world. But He became what He was not before; He became Man. He became incarnate. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). He became man in a supernatural way, because it was the only way in which the Holy One could take on a human body. That supernatural way was the Virgin birth. And now He is both God and Man. He was God and Man on earth; He is still God and Man in Glory; He will always be God and Man. Around these glorious facts upon which everything for time and eternity depends the conflict of the ages has raged. All the false doctrines and systems of the past either denied His

essential Deity, or His true humanity. All these "isms," Arianism, and its modern expression in Unitarianism, the International Bible Students Association (Russellism), Appollinarism, Nestorianism, and others are answered and silenced by that terse phrase, used by the true Church from earliest times, "very God and very Man." Nor will this true confession of Himself ever cease, in spite of boasting Modernism, which dreams of a victory over the creeds of historic Christianity.

And how blessedly the Gospel records bear witness to the truth of His Deity and His perfect humanity! What joy it is for the believing heart to read again and again the familiar scenes of His life, as it pleased the Holy Spirit to reveal them, and find here that which bears witness to Him as very God and very Man, and which refreshes and satisfies the hearts of His people.

As the twelve-year-old boy He could speak in divine self-consciousness of being about His Father's business, while He manifested Himself in the midst of the Jewish doctors as the Wisdom. Yet He was a true man, for in His beautiful humility He "went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them" (Luke ii:46-51).

He went to the marriage in Cana of Galilee. He mingled with the guests and rejoiced with them that rejoiced, as He also wept with those who wept. His presence at the feast of joy manifests His true humanity. But the humble guest at the marriage is very God and He revealed Himself as such when He changed the water into wine. He displayed His omnipotence and thus manifested His glory.

We see Him on a weary way through Samaria, and when He reached Jacob's well, "being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well." As the tired and thirsty traveler He manifests His true humanity. But ere long when He speaks

to the lost soul He reveals Himself as very God, for He possesses omniscience, knowing the secrets of the human heart and life. Again we see Him as a true Man, eating and drinking with the publicans and sinners, so that the hypocrites called Him a "wine-bibber." Yet He was very God, for He spoke to the penitent soul, "Go in peace; thy sins are forgiven thee," and who can forgive sins, but God?

Wearied with much service, tired out when evening came, they took Him, even as He was, in the little ship. There He lay, utterly weary, asleep on a pillow. All so perfectly human. But when they disturbed His peaceful slumber, we see Him as God, for "He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace! Be still! And the wind ceased, and there was a calm" (Mark iv:39). A perfect, true Man, when He approached the grave of His friend Lazarus and wept. "Jesus wept!" A few minutes later He spoke His majestic commanding word, "Lazarus, come forth!" The white-clad figure rises out of the tomb. Lazarus is raised from the dead. He who wept is God, for as God raises the dead, so does He.

He spent the night on the mountain in prayer. The mountain top He reached by climbing there. But in the fourth watch He left the place of prayer and came back to His disciples, "walking on the water." He hungered; another evidence of His true humanity. But He who was hungry could feed thousands with a few small loaves and a few fishes; another display of Deity.

Throughout the blessed, holy life He lived on earth we find constantly the double demonstration of His Deity and of His humanity.

And even in His passion, in His sacrificial, atoning work we behold Him as God and Man. They came into the garden to arrest Him as Man, and willingly He held out His

hands to be taken captive by them, for His hour had come. But before they took Him He had spoken His "I am" and they all fell backward to the ground, for He whom they came to deliver into the hands of the Gentiles is Jehovah, the "I am." On the cross He suffered in His body as a Man; but He manifested Himself as God when He spoke to the dying thief, "Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

And oh, the comfort which is for us in this truth, that our Saviour-Lord is the God-Man! As God He has worked out our redemption. He who is the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person made purification of sins. We are redeemed, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot; but that blood which was paid for our redemption was the blood of God (Acts xx:28). As the glorified Man, the risen Christ at the right hand of God, the Man who lived on earth, was tempted and tried, suffered and passed through all sorrows and griefs, He is now for His own the merciful and faithful High priest. "For in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted." —"For we have not a high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, apart from sin" (Heb. ii:18; iv:15). "Wherefore He is able also to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth and maketh intercession for them (Heb. vii:25).

And of this Christ, the God-Man, very God and very Man, Modernism, the worst form of apostate Christendom, tries to rob us. They rob Him of His Deity. They deny the miraculous in His life on earth. They rob Him of His Saviourhood and make Him but a superior religious teacher

of ethics. They deny His physical resurrection and His bodily presence in glory. But God's true Church is built upon the one foundation, which is He Himself, and the confession will never cease, in spite of all the modernistic infidelity. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." But let it be more than a confession; may we know Him better and better, enjoy Him more and more, trusting in Him, seeking His face and the comfort of His priestly ministrations. The day cannot be far away when we shall meet the glorified Man, our Lord, and be face to face with Him, the God-Man, to be transformed into the same image.

The One Doctrine

"WHOSOEVER transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 10, 11). The one great doctrine is the doctrine of Christ. And what is that doctrine? It is the revealed truth concerning the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He is the Son of God, whom the Father sent into the world. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

This is the doctrine of Christ. Anyone who does not hold the doctrine of Christ that He is absolutely God, one with the Father, come into the world, hath not God. He is without God and without hope in the world. He is an Anti-

christ. "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 John iv: 2, 3). One who denies the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ is no Christian at all, and all fellowship should be denied to him. This seems severe and intolerant. But it is not, if we consider what the denial of the Person of our holy and blessed Lord means. God grant unto us, who hold the doctrine of Christ, a divine jealousy for His honor and glory, manifested by separation from everything which in any way denies the doctrine upon which Christianity rests.

But how blessed to faith to see in the first Epistle of John the doctrine of Christ revealed and the blessings and comforts brought forth, which those enjoy who abide in this doctrine. In the Gospel of John the beloved disciple writes about the Son of God, how He came from the Father and was in the world, and how He left the world to go back to the Father (John xvi:28). The Son of God is likewise the theme of the Holy Spirit in the first Epistle of John. "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with His *Son* Jesus Christ" (i:3). This fellowship means that we share the Father's thoughts about His Son, and that we enjoy in the Son the blessed and eternal relationship with the Father. In the measure our faith enters into the doctrine of Christ, in that measure shall we have deeper fellowship with the Father and the Son.

Let us call to our remembrance other passages in the first Epistle of John in which our blessed Lord as the Son of God is mentioned. They are sweet and precious to faith, and, if read in the Spirit, they will bring the joy, the bless-

ing, the peace and the comfort of the doctrine of Christ to our hearts.

"The blood of Jesus Christ *His Son* cleanseth us from all sin" (i:7). That precious blood, His own blood, has cleansed us once and for all. "For this purpose *the Son of God* was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil" (iii:8). "And this is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of *His Son* Jesus Christ and love one another as He gave us commandment. And he that keepeth His commandments [which are: believing on Him and loving one another] dwelleth in Him and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us" (iii:23, 24). "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent *His only begotten Son* into the world that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent *His Son* into the world to be the propitiation for our sins." "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another" (iv:9, 11). "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent *the Son* to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is *the Son of God,* God dwelleth in him and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath for us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him" (iv:14-16). "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is *the Son of God?"* (v:5). "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which he had testified of *His Son.* He that believeth on *the Son of God* hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not, God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave to *His Son.* And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is *in His*

Son. He that hath *the Son* hath life; he that hath not the *Son of God* hath not life" (v:9-12). "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of *the Son of God,* that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of *the Son of God.* And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us" (v:13, 14). "And we know that *the Son of God* is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in *His Son* Jesus Christ. This is the *true God* and eternal life" (v:20).

May our faith lay hold anew of these simple yet deep and precious revelations. They are the doctrine of Christ. Into this we must enter constantly and manifest in our lives the fruits of this doctrine, love and righteousness. The increasing rejection of the doctrine of Christ demands the increased appreciation of that doctrine. The more the enemy attacks the Person of Christ, the more the Holy Spirit demands of us, who belong to Christ, that we exalt Him. Everything at the present time seems to be aimed at the setting aside of the doctrine upon which our Hope rests. Higher Criticism, evil doctrines, the spurious gospels, ethical teachings and every other false doctrine strikes at the blessed Person of our Lord. The shadow of the Antichrist is cast in our days. Let us heed God's Word. Let us be separated from those who deny Christ, or we are partakers of their evil deeds. The path of the true believer becomes narrower. It must be so. But Christ becomes more precious, more real to our souls.

What awful times are coming upon this age according to God's Word! With the rejection of the doctrine of Christ this age sides completely with Satan, and that great being is both blinding his victims and using them for his own sin-

ister purposes. The blindness is fearful! It will be worse before long! They rush into complete apostasy, and from there into the delusion with the lying wonders, and then complete darkness will come next. Let us praise God for the doctrine of Christ, which is our salvation, and may God give us faith and courage to walk according to that doctrine.

The Love that Passeth Knowledge

THE Love of Christ! The heart almost shrinks from attempting to write on the matchless, unfathomable love of our blessed and adorable Lord. All the saints of God who have spoken and written on the Love of Christ have never told out its fulness and vastness, its heights and its depths. "The Love of Christ which passeth knowledge" (Eph. iii:19). And yet we *do* know the Love of Christ. While we cannot fully grasp that mighty, eternal Love, our hearts can enjoy it and we can ever know more of it. And He Himself, whose Love is set upon us, wants us to drink constantly of the ocean of his never-changing Love and receive new tokens, new glimpses of it. Surely His own blessed Spirit, though one feels so insufficient for such an object, will guide us in our meditation. The Love of Christ, the Holy Spirit ever longs to make known and to impart to our poor and feeble hearts.

The Love of our Lord is an eternal Love. It is not a thing of time. It antedates the foundation of the world.

> "His gracious eye surveyed us
> Ere stars were seen above."

He as the Son of God in the bosom of God was the object of Love. "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John xvii:24). And then He knew us and His

Love was even then set upon us, before we ever were in existence. He knew our sinfulness, our enmity, our vileness, and in Love, which passeth knowledge, He looked forward to the time when He would manifest this Love to us, His fallen creatures. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it" (Psalm cxxxix:6).

It was Love which brought Him down from the Glory which He had with God. What Love to come into this dark, sin-cursed world, a world full of enemies! What Love to leave that bright and glorious home and appear as man, entering as a creature, the world He had made. And there was no room for Him in the inn. It passeth knowledge.

And then that life, which He lived on earth, was lived in that mighty Love.

"A love that led Thee here below
To tread a lonely path in grace,
To pass through sorrow, grief and woe,
The portion of a ruin'd race."

What Love we see in Him, in every step of that lonely path! What compassion, what tenderness in every action, in every word we discover, ever new and fresh. Wherever we look we behold that Love. Loving compassion rested upon the multitudes; with Love He compassed the poor, the sinful, the oppressed, the heartsick and the outcast. Love carried the weak and failing disciples, who had believed on him.

A blessed word it is, which stands in the beginning of the thirteenth chapter in the Gospel of John. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." His Love for His own was expressed by serving them. He pleased not Himself but had come to minister. He then girded Himself and began to wash the disciples'

feet. What humiliation! Yet it was the fruit of Love. All He did was born of Love. His was on earth a constant, a never-tiring, an enduring Love. All the selfishness of His disciples could not quench that Love. Nothing could quench His Love for His own. Nothing will ever quench it. Peter denied Him. "And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter" (Luke xxii:61). Was it a look of reproach? Was it a frown of displeasure which Peter saw in that beloved face? Far from it. Love in its divine perfection shone out of the eyes of the Son of God. And after His resurrection that Love was still the same. There was no reproach connected with the restoration of Peter to service. In the greatest tenderness and Love He committed to His disciple, who had so shamefully denied Him, the lambs and sheep so dear to His own loving heart (John xxi).

Again we say, Oh! Love! thou passeth knowledge! How could man's imagination and invention ever have produced such a loving Person as our Lord, revealing the perfection of divine Love!

But there is greater Love than the Love which we behold in His blessed life on earth. The greater Love is manifested when He laid down His life. He came into the world to die, to be the propitiation for our sins. He came to take our place on the cross. He came to drink the cup of wrath in our stead and suffer the awful penalty of our sins.

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. *But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*"

God in Love gave thus His Son, and He gave Himself in Love. From shame to shame, from suffering to suffering,

from pain to pain, and agony to agony that Love went on to plunge into the deepest sorrow, to reach at last the place where His loving lips had to cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

> "To death of shame Thy love did reach,
> God's holy judgment then to bear;
> Ah, Lord, what human tongue can teach
> *Or tell the love that brought Thee there.*"

Ah! what human tongue can teach or tell the Love that brought Thee there! It passeth knowledge. But with loving, praising hearts, in worship and adoration we can look up to that cross on which the Prince of Glory died and say with Paul, "He loved me, He gave Himself for me." And again we join with the innumerable hosts of His own redeemed in the Glory song. "Unto Him that loveth us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us Kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be Glory and dominion forever. Amen." And, beloved reader, that Love which knew you and us all before we ever existed, that Love which came from glory for you, that Love which went into the jaws of death, endured the cross and despised the shame, that Love which gave so willingly, gave as we can never give, that Love is still the same. It changes not. His Love knows no fluctuations. That perfect Love cannot grow cold or indifferent.

We all had our first love; when first we saw Him with the eyes of faith, how our hearts were enraptured. How soon that love began to grow cold and decreased instead of increased. Then our walk and service became affected, for thus it must ever be when the heart is not responding to His Love and not in living, loving touch with Himself. Oh! the weeks and months and years of our Christian experience spent without the full enjoyment of His Love and

Presence. But has this changed His Love? Has our unfaithfulness, our waywardness, our failure and backsliding affected His Love? No. He is the same loving Lord, the same loving Christ who has borne us and yearned over us, who has prayed for us and kept us. Whenever we turn to Him with broken hearts, confessing our sins, when in shame we hide our faces and tell Him all our failures, we find Him still the same loving Lord that He was when His eyes rested upon Peter. Oh! how He must love us! How He must love us, with that Love which passeth knowledge! What treasures that Love contains! Exhaustless, it is ever flowing full and free towards His own.

How it must grieve Him to see us so indifferent, neither hot nor cold. How it must grieve Him that we enjoy His Love so little that we permit that Love so little to serve us and give Him so little opportunity to manifest His mighty Love towards us. Alas! we even mistrust that Love. When suffering and loss overtake us, when instead of prosperity adversity is our lot, we doubt that Love. Fears and anxieties are nothing less than an impeachment of the Love which passeth knowledge. His Love will never fail. He will see us safe home. Let the forces of the enemy roar, let trials and troubles come, His Love will keep us. His Love is our eternal portion.

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

And soon He will have us with Himself. The church He loved, for which He gave Himself, the church He sanctied by the washing of water, this church He will present to Himself a glorious church (Eph. v:24-27). Even while

on earth He made known His loving purpose, for He prayed, "The Glory which Thou has given me I have given to them."

It is His Love which will make us sharers of His own glory and inheritance. What that Love will do then! How we shall drink of that Love, deeper than we ever could drink here! Oh, the depths of the Love to be fathomed in all eternity! Oh, the length and breadth and height to be measured! It can never, no never, be exhausted.

Oh, child of God, is not thy poor wandering heart beginning to be warmed? Is the warmth of His Love, the Love of Christ, refreshing your soul? Thank God for it. It is but a demonstration of His Love. And do we not want more of it? Do we not need it?

All our indifference, our cold heartedness, our prayerlessness, our self-indulgences, our inactivity and all else which mars our Christian lives, are because we do not have the Love of Christ before our hearts. If we were constantly enjoying His Love and this mighty Love would constrain us, what self-sacrificing lives we would live! How we would love one another and in love serve one another. What peace there would be among those of like precious faith. With a better heart-knowledge of the Love of Christ what joy would be ours in all trials and suffering, and with what boldness we would approach the throne of Grace and make constant use of our God-given privilege, prayer.

The Love of Christ would lead us on and on in love for souls, in service untiring, and yet the same Love too will make us long and pray for His coming.

O God, our Father, grant unto us all and to all Thy people throughout the world a greater, a deeper, a more real knowledge of the love of Thine ever-blessed Son and fill us through that knowledge with all Thine own fulness. Amen.

"The Wonderful"

ONE of His names is "Wonderful" (Isaiah ix:6). Long before Isaiah had uttered this name the angel of the Lord had announced the same name. As such He appeared to Manoah. This Angel of Jehovah, the Person who appeared repeatedly in Old Testament history, is an uncreated angel. Of this Being we read that He is the Redeemer, for Jacob speaks of Him as "the Angel which redeemed me from all evil" (Gen. xlvii:15). He is the Angel whose voice must be obeyed, who has power to pardon transgressions, in whom is the name of God (Exod. xxiii:20-23). He is the angel of His Presence who saved them (Isa. lxiii:9) and Exodus xxxiii:14 also refers to this Being, "My presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest." This Angel of Jehovah speaks in the Book of Judges and declares, "I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you into the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said I will never break my covenant with you" (Judges ii:1). He appeared unto Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush and He spoke to Moses as the I am (Exod. iii). The same One appeared before Joshua and he worshipped in His presence. With Him Jacob wrestled, with Jehovah, the God of hosts (Hos. xii:4-6). Malachi iii:1 shows that the Lord Himself is this Angel, the Angel of the Covenant, who also visited Abraham in the form of man (Gen. xviii).

And after all these manifestations, seven hundred years after Isaiah had announced Him as the Wonderful, He appeared in human form in the midst of His people. And now we know by divine revelation in the completed Word of God that He *is* wonderful in His Person and in His work; but no mind can fathom, no heart can grasp, no pen can describe how wonderful He is.

He is wonderful if we think of Him as the Only Begotten of the Father. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John i:1-3). "By Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were made by Him and for Him; and He is before all things and by Him all things consist" (Col. i:16, 17). He is the image of the invisible God, the brightness of His glory and the express image of His Person. How wonderful such a One, who ever was, with no beginning, One with God!

How wonderful His humiliation. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being in fashion as a man He humbled Himself" (Phil. ii:6-8). "For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham" (Heb. ii:16). Wonderful condescension that He who created the angels should be made lower than the angels and lay His glory by, to appear in the form of man on earth!

Wonderful is He in His incarnation, "that holy thing," as the angel announced Him, truly God and Man. Born of the woman, resting on the bosom of the Virgin as a little child and yet He is the One who ever is in the bosom of the Father.

Wonderful was that blessed life He lived on earth of which the beloved disciple bears such a beautiful witness. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked

upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life. For the life was manifested and we have seen it and bear witness and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us" (1 John 1:1, 2). Wonderful are the blessed words which came from His lips, wonderful in His moral glory, His untiring service, His love, His patience and everything which the Holy Spirit has been pleased to tell us of His earthly life.

The more our hearts contemplate Him the more wonderful He appears. But still greater and more wonderful is it that He went to the cross to give His life as a ransom for many, that the Just One should die for the unjust, that He who knew no sin was made sin for us and pay the penalty of sins on the cross. He is the Wonderful in His great work on the cross, the depths of which have never been fathomed. And what can we say of His wonderful glory, His wonderful place, His wonderful power, His wonderful grace! How wonderfully He has dealt with us, with each one of us individually. How wonderful it is that He knows each of His sheep, that He guides each, provides for, loveth, succors, stands by, restores, never leaves nor forsakes each who has trusted in Him and belongs to Him! How wonderful are His ways with us, that He guides His eyes and that His loving power and omnipotent love is on our side.

How wonderful is His grace, the supply and fulness of it!

"One evening," said C. H. Spurgeon, "I was riding home after a heavy day's work, weary and sore depressed, when, suddenly, as a lightning flash, came: 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' And I said: 'I should think it is, Lord,' and burst out laughing. It seemed to make unbelief so absurd.

"It was as if some little fish, being very thirsty, was troubled about drinking the river dry; and Father Thames said: 'Drink away, little fish, my stream is sufficient for

thee.' Or it seemed like a little mouse in the granaries of Egypt after seven years of plenty, fearing it might die of famine, and Joseph might say: 'Cheer up, little mouse, my granaries are sufficient for thee.' Again I imagined a man away up yonder on the mountain saying to himself: 'I fear I shall exhaust all the oxygen in the atmosphere.' But the earth might say: 'Breathe away, O man, and fill thy lungs ever; my atmosphere is sufficient for thee.'"

In His coming manifestation He will be wonderful. Wonderful He will be when we shall see Him and stand in His presence. What a day it will be when we see Him face to face! Then we shall know all the loveliness and wonderfulness of His adorable Person and His wonder ways with us. With what wonderment we shall then behold Him. And when He comes with His Saints, when the heavens are lit up with untold glory, when He comes to judge, to establish His Kingdom, to speak peace to the nations, to restore creation to its right condition, when He reigns and all His redeemed ones with Him—Oh how wonderful it all will be!

He is altogether lovely and He is altogether wonderful. Glory to His name! Well has one said: "He pervades the whole of the New Testament with His presence, so that every doctrine it teaches, every duty it demands, every narrative it records, every comfort it gives, every hope it inspires, gathers about His person and ministers to His glory. So dear does He thus become to the heart of the believer, that Luther may well be excused for exclaiming, 'I had rather be in hell with Christ, than in heaven without Him.'

"We believe in Him as our Saviour (Acts vi:31); confess Him as our Lord (Rom. x:9); we have redemption through His blood (Eph. i:7); we look to Him as our Leader (Heb.

xii:2); we follow Him as our Teacher (Eph. iv:20, 21); we feed upon Him as our Bread (John vi:48); we go to Him in our thirst (John vi:37); we enter by Him as our door (John x:9); we are in Him as our vine (John xv:5); we find in Him our rest (Matt. xi:28); we have in Him our example (John xiii:15); He is our righteousness (2 Cor. v:21); we are succored by Him in temptation (Heb. ii:18); we turn to Him for sympathy (Heb. iv:15); we obtain through Him our victory (1 Cor. xv:57); we overcome by Him the world (1 John v:5); we have in Him eternal life (1 John v:11, 12); we gain by Him the resurrection (Phil. iii:20, 21); we appear with Him in glory (Col. iii:4), we exult in His everlasting love (Rev. i:5, 6)."

May the Holy Spirit fill our hearts and eyes with Himself and reveal to us through the written Word more of the matchless beauty of the wonderful Person of our Saviour and Lord! We honor and adore Thee, blessed, blessed Lord, and while Thou art rejected, we, thy feeble people would know more of Thyself and keep closer at Thy feet. Amen.

The Purchase Price

TWICE in the First Epistle to the Corinthians the Holy Spirit speaks of the fact that we are bought with a price. "For ye were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. vi:20). "Ye are bought with a price; be ye not the servants of men" (vii:23). The Corinthians had drifted into worldliness and the Holy Spirit reminded them that they were not their own. Bought with a price by God Himself, all belong to Him. How we need to be reminded of it for our own peace and comfort, that

we are thus bought with a price and as God's bought ones are His property; we belong to Him, body, soul and spirit. This great truth must constantly be kept by the power of the Spirit of God before our hearts, in order to live to the Glory of God. Let the child of God lose sight of this great fact of redemption and the claim which God has on account of it on our whole being, and spiritual poverty and unreality in the things of Christ will at once be the result.

What a wonderful, blessed theme it is! It is so simple and unfathomable. Neither the price which was paid for our redemption nor the Person who paid the price can be fully estimated by the saints of God. If all the deep thoughts and meditations all the children of God enjoyed could be brought together they would be found insufficient to reach the heights and the depths of this marvellous theme. Who can measure all the sins, all the guilt, all the misery, sorrow and shame, all the torments of an eternal darkness into which sin has plunged us and from which the price has completely set us free! Who can fully grasp the glory, the eternal glory of an eternal home with God, which the price has bought for us believing sinners! Bought with a price! Bought with a price! Such will be eternity's glorious memory. All the memories of earth, of suffering, of service and blessing may be blotted out. This theme can never be effaced. The glorious song which begins when the saints are gathered before the throne will re-echo through the vaults of heaven and roll on throughout the ages to come. "Thou art worthy. . . . Thou wast slain. . . . Thou hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood" (Rev. v:9).

In a day when the Lord who bought us is denied, when we hear less and less of His Blood, how well it is that we refresh our own souls and honor our dishonored Lord by tracing once more the ever blessed truth that we are bought

with a price. One might say that every great truth revealed in God's holy Word is somewhere connected with this brief sentence, "Ye are bought with a price." The One who came to earth to pay the price was not a creature. He was not an angel. Had He been a creature of God, a holy angel or merely a perfect man, He could not have bought us. Whenever the Deity of the Lord Jesus is denied the purchase price is equally denied. The price which was needed to redeem us could only be paid by one, who is very God Himself. Such He is, who came in the fulness of time born of a woman. The Creator of heaven and earth came to buy us with a price. That was the great purpose of His incarnation. For this He came in the form of a servant.

And He bought us. He paid the price, which in its value, in its matchless worth can only be understood by God. Holy ground it is upon which we stand. The theme to our souls becomes more entrancing, holier and more precious, as an apostate Christendom turns away from it and against it. Not that perfect life of righteousness, nor His life of doing good was the price, which has bought us. The incarnate One in all He was in Himself, what He said and what He did in His spotless life could not effect our redemption. The price He paid, the price with which He bought us, was paid by Him on the cross, when He gave Himself and stood in the sinner's place before a holy God. The price is His precious blood. He purchased us with His own blood. As the forsaken One He hung on that cross, which He so willingly endured, with all the shame, He despised.

"There from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flowed mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

Thus we often sing. But who can know what it was for Him to pay the price and have the curse of judgment pass over His head!

Glory to God! Because such a One paid the price we know that we are bought and redeemed. All was met by Him! Every sin of those who accept Him as Saviour has been fully paid. He has redeemed us from the power of sin, the power of Satan, an eternal separation from God. He has by the price He paid brought us to God. Bought with a price! We look up into a Father's loving face. Bought with a price! The Father's bosom is our resting place and the Father's love (the love wherewith He loveth His adorable Son), is our eternal portion. Bought with a price! The Son has given us His life and our life is hid with Christ in God. Bought with a price! The Holy Spirit has come and has made our bodies His temple and sealed us. Bought with a price! A heavenly possession has been purchased for us; to be like Him and with Him is the glorious goal of His redeemed. Bought with a price! Hallelujah! What a theme!

Beloved! As we think it all over again, as once more we remember His love, our hearts are filled with grief and shame. Bought with a price! Yes, but how about "glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's"? How we failed! How little we, His bought ones, have yielded ourselves to Him who bought us. How often we have lived as if we were our own—lived like the poor unsaved ones about us, seeking our own pleasures and gratification, never thinking that He who bought us, bought us that we might be His present possession, His willing slaves. Well did a brother write many years ago, "Our bodies are the property of Him who has purchased us at such a cost; for He did not buy us partly, but entirely. Let,

then, the God of our mercy have the willing service of those bodies which are His. The fleeting days of our sojourn here below are our opportunity of glorifying Him, by yielding ourselves to Him as those that are alive from the dead, and our members as instruments of righteousness unto God." May we confess to Him our want of practical living out of all this. There is still a little time left (how few the days may be!) in which we can glorify Him in our bodies and live unto Him. We can still serve Him as Lord a little while longer. And reader, whatever your failure may have been in the past in living a separated life, how little you may have glorified Him and how much you may have dishonored and denied Him who has bought you with a price, be assured, that His grace will enable you to glorify Him, to live unto Him. Just seek His face and tell Him all.

"I was bought with a price; 'tis a wonderful theme,
For the Maker of all things came down to redeem,
And He purchased my body, my spirit, my all,
From the firm grasp of Satan, from under his thrall.

I was bought with a price from the hard iron yoke,
From the tears and the groans that my anguish bespoke,
From the arms of that monster who gloated to see
How despairingly wretched his victim could be.

I was bought with a price from the torments of hell,
From that dread lake of fire that no waters could quell;
As a brand from the burning He drew me and smiled,
As He placed in His bosom His poor weary child.

I was bought with a price, nay, not silver or gold,
For their worth might be known and their value be told,
But the blood incorruptible never can fail,
All our foes before it shall eternally quail.

I was bought with a price, O my soul, take it in,
I'm redeemed from the power and guilt of my sin;
Yes, Lord, I am thine, I am all, all thine own,
With Thee in Thy yoke would I labor alone."

The Manger, the Cross, and the Throne

THE Manger, the Cross, and the Throne, there are the three great and wonderful events in the glorious life of our Saviour-Lord. "Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His Name Immanuel." It was the Prophet's glad message of long ago. And once more He looked and in prophetic vision He saw Him, the child born, the Son given, with Names which tell out His Glory: "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isai. vii: 14; ix: 6.) Seven hundred years after He came. In the manger of Bethlehem He was cradled, whose eternal dwelling place is the Father's bosom. That little Babe is none other than God's Son, He by whom and for whom all things were created, the seen things and the unseen. Oh, wonderful humiliation that the Creator took the creature's place, to live the creature's life! And when He was born, when the Beloved had laid His glory by, to take on the prepared body, prepared by God the Holy Spirit, heaven was opened; light and glory burst forth. Angels announced the glad news which ever since the Prophet had spoken, had been believed, and longingly expected, by the saints of God among the Jews. The first note was "Fear not!"

> "What was the first angelic word
> That the startled shepherds heard?
> Fear not! Beloved, it comes to you
> As a loving Message most sweet and true;
> As true for you as it was for them
> In the lonely fields of Bethlehem;
> And as sweet today as it was that night,
> When the Glory dazzled their mortal sight."

Then came the good tidings that He had come. He had come to live among men. He had come in poverty, in

weakness. He who was rich became poor for our sakes. But why did He come? What was the purpose of His coming? There can be but one great answer to this question. He Himself answers it for us. "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." That was His word as He came. He knew why He came. In the eternal councils of the Godhead it was purposed why and for what He should come into the world. "Wherefore when He cometh into the world (in incarnation) He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared me." (Hebrews x: 5, 6.) He came to accomplish the eternal will of God; He came to manifest His Love; He came to be the Lamb of God. Oh! We can sum it up in one sentence: "He came into the world to die." He who is the Life, came to give His life. He who was holy, on whom death had no claim, came to taste death. He who knew no sin, came to be made sin for us. The Just One came to die for the unjust. He who is the Fellow of God came to be smitten of God. That is why He was cradled in that manger. It was the first step towards the Cross.

All was appointed from eternity. He came when the fulness of time, the appointed time had come. He had to be born in Bethlehem, not in Nazareth, the Virgin Mary's home; it was thus divinely ordered. And so were the years when He grew up in the poverty of Nazareth. And when He began that blessed ministry, when He revealed Himself, when He worked His deeds of power and mercy, every step of the way He shows He is God manifested in the flesh, He spoke of His hour. "Mine hour is not yet come." But finally it came and then He reached the goal, the Cross. Oh! Hallowed spot, "the Cross on which the Prince of Glory died"!

How little the great mass of professing Christians know

of all this! They speak of a "Christ-mass"; they think as if it is virtue to keep a holiday commemorating a fictitious day of His birth. They make it a day of feasting and drinking; yet Christ, who came to die the sinner's death, they know not. But what it must have been for Him to come with the perfect knowledge of the sufferings of the Cross! Then live, and ever that Cross before His heart. No finite creature can know what it was and meant for Him! But what it means for us who believe in a small measure we realize. We turn from the manger to the Cross. We know it is there "He loved me and gave Himself for me." We know it was there "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree." And there the floodgates of love and grace are opened wide, and grace more bottomless than the sea pours forth to make us free, to save us for time and all eternity. In the words of a sweet singer of long ago:

"Jesus came!—and came for me.
Simple words! and yet expressing
Depths of holy mystery,
Depths of wondrous love and blessing,
Holy Spirit, make me see
All His coming means for me;
Take the things of Christ, I pray,
Show them to my heart today."

—*Frances R. Havergal*

The Manger, the Cross and after that the Throne! Yes, He is on the Throne. In holy, wondrous majesty at the right hand of God there is the Man, who laid in a manger, who filled the Cross. Sufferings and death forever gone, never to be repeated. Risen and glorified He is gone to heaven, angels and authorities being made subject unto Him. And we, who believe, are in Him there. We share His place with Him and He makes us sharers of His Glory.

The Manger, the Cross, and the Throne. The Throne He has is not yet, the Throne which God has promised Him "His Throne of Glory" is still future. But as surely as He lay in that manger and hung on that Cross; as surely as He is now on the Father's throne, so surely will He receive from the Father's hand the Throne of all the earth. He looks forward to it; He waits for that Throne. We wait with Him in His own patience. Once more heaven will open. Once more the Glory will fill the heavens. It will be His Glory. Once more the tenants of Glory will be seen. Yet more than all this—"He will come and His saints with Him" to rule and reign with Him.

These are the three great fundamentals of our Faith, of true Christianity: The Manger, His incarnation, the Virgin Birth; the Cross, His sacrificial death, the peace He made in the blood of the Cross; the Throne, the coming glory.

"The Unspeakable Gift"

"THANKS be unto God for His unspeakable gift" (1 Cor. ix:15). This sentence stands at the close of a chapter devoted to Christian liberality in giving. The Spirit of God gives a very simple direction. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver." And why does God love a cheerful giver? Because He Himself is the great Giver. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James i:17). To receive gifts is a blessed thing, but it is a greater blessing to give, even as

our Lord Jesus Christ has said "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts xx:35). There are many exhortations to give and also promises in connection with it. "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully" (2 Cor. ix:6). "And let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. vi:9). "But to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb. xiii:16).

"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." What then is this greatest of all the gifts the eternal, all-wise and holy Giver has given? He has given many and varied gifts in His physical creation, for the sustenance, for the comfort and for the enjoyment of His creatures. What blessed gifts these are! How lavish He has been in nature. But nature, revealing in so many ways His benevolence, His wisdom and His glory, is not His unspeakable gift. He has given to man, as an intelligent being, a revelation of Himself. That revelation is found in the Bible, the Word of God. It is a greater gift than the gifts of creation. What a priceless gift it is, this Word of God! As we read it, He speaks to us. In it He meets the deepest needs of the human heart; provides through it guidance, and wipes our tears away.

Wonderful as this gift of His written revelation is, it is not the unspeakable gift. Another gift which has come from above to those who belong to the household of faith is the gift of the Holy Spirit. And He, the third person of the Trinity, brings also gifts to the believer and to the body of Christ, the Church. But is He that unspeakable gift? Does He, God the Spirit, ever allude to Himself as being the greatest of all gifts bestowed upon man? The unspeakable gift of which He writes, is God's ever blessed Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is God's highest, God's

most precious, God's unspeakable gift. A greater gift than He, even God in His power could not give. The gift of His well-beloved Son is so unspeakably great and glorious, that it cannot be fully comprehended by the finite mind of man.

It is an unspeakable gift, when we think of who He is, whom God has given. Not a created being; not a mighty angel, nor legions of angels; not the highest of all the created beings, the archangel, but His only begotten Son. Had God sent a created being, marvelous and glorious though that being was, it would not deserve the expression "unspeakable gift." Such a gift would not have been a God-like manifestation of His love. He sent His Son. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Begotten Son." And that Son is God. He is one with God. Sharer of His eternity, His glory and all His attributes. Of this unspeakably great relation to the Father, of His own eternal Godhead and glory, which He had with the Father before the world was, He witnessed when He walked down here. He was, in incarnation, God manifested in the flesh. No man knoweth the Son but the Father. Though we, as believers know Him, yet is our knowledge of Him but partial and imperfect. If we understood Him in all His glory, in all the majesty of His being, He would not be the unspeakable gift. The denial of His Deity robs man of the knowledge of the love of God and of the unspeakable gift. Modernism, Mormonism, Russellism, Unitarianism, Theosophy, and Christian Science (falsely so-called) know nothing of "the unspeakable gift," for they all deny that the gift is the eternal Son of God.

The Son of God is His unspeakable gift, because God gave Him to be the propitiation for our sins. To the lost soul at Samaria's well, He said "If thou knewest the gift of God."

How little even we know what it means, "God gave His only begotten Son." We think of the manger, see the babe there, and think of Him as the unspeakable gift; but the incarnation did not exhaust God's giving. We think of Him in a life of poverty and privation, that He, who had not where to lay His head, whose rest was always on the Father's bosom, was thus given to tabernacle among men; nevertheless it does not explain God's unspeakable gift.

To know what it means, "God gave," we must go to the cross. There we see the full story of His love. "He made Him, who knew no sin, sin for us."—"The Just One died for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."—"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."—"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed." And yet if we sit down and ponder over these and other passages of Scripture, we may learn now and then a little bit more, what it means, "God gave," but we never reach the end. We shall never be able to say, now I know what it all means. God's gift of His Son in our stead is so unspeakably great that no saint can fathom it.

The Lord Jesus Christ is God's unspeakable gift, because in this gift God gives to the believing sinner all He has to give. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. viii:31, 32). God made Him His heir in resurrection.

The risen Son of Man is "the heir of all things," and we are the heirs of God, Christ's joint heirs. "All things are yours" (1 Cor. iii:21).

Even now we can sing in faith, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. i:3). But what will it be when we shall know Him face to face; when we shall know as we are known, when the immensity of God's unspeakable gift will be realized by us in eternity? What a day it will be when we shall know Him, the unspeakable gift, in glory! And while we wait for the day dawn, the rising of the Morning Star, we can praise and worship, and show our deepest appreciation to God for His unspeakable gift by serving Him in holiness and righteousness. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!

The Unspeakable Joy

"WHOM having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter i:8). Thus Peter wrote to his brethren in the dispersion. What a testimony it is to the reality of the faith of these early Christians! Peter had known the Lord, walked in His fellowship, heard Him speak, and knowing Him he loved Him. Those to whom he wrote, like ourselves, had not seen the Lord Jesus, but believing, they rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory, because they loved Him, were attached to Him, suffered with Him and waited for His coming revelation. There are many joys on earth, but none is satisfying and none is lasting. It is different with the

joy of the Lord and the rejoicing in the Lord. It satisfies the heart and it is an everlasting joy, for He who is our joy, in whom we glory, is the everlasting Lord of glory.

But how can we know such unspeakable joy, a joy which passeth all other joys, which satisfies? A joy which is our real strength, for it is written "The joy of the Lord is your strength." Many true believers mourn over the fact that this joy unspeakable and full of glory is not their daily portion as it should be. So many children of God lack this real joy, which helps to overcome difficulties and to show patience in suffering, which leaves calm when all things go wrong.

Rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory is the result of believing in the Lord and having Him constantly before the heart. He must be the one great object of our lives. The happiest occupation must be the hour when we seek His face and are in communion with Him. To cultivate a more real and holy intimacy with Him must become increasingly our ambition and, as a result of such a fellowship with Him, there will be a greater self-surrender, self-effacement and humility. This is the path which will increase our rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And all this is dependent on the growth in the knowledge and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. That growth will never take place unless we constantly use the Word of God. It is in the Word that we find the Lord of glory and the glory of the Lord; and through the Word of God and the ministry of the Spirit, the Lord becomes daily more real and the One altogether lovely to our hearts. Then, as we "comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height" and "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," the Spirit of God fills us with His peace and His joy.

The days in which we live become more evil; even so it must be. Powers are now at work which aim at the flock of God to rob them, if it were possible, of all. Eyes are being blinded. Indifference reigns. Laodicea is here. The only way to be kept is by knowing the Lord Jesus Christ better, having greater fellowship with Him. The day is not far hence when our joy unspeakable through believing, will be changed to joy unspeakable by seeing Him as He is.

The Unspeakable Glory

"I KNEW a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth). Such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth). How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (2 Cor. xii:1-4). Every reader of the Word of God knows that the man of whom Paul speaks is he himself. He had such an experience. When he was caught up into the third heaven, and entered paradise, in that which was more than a mere vision, he heard *unspeakable* words. These words signified the glorious mysteries of the glory which is in store for all the saints of God. In the first epistle Paul penned by the direction and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he received that unique and blessed revelation, which embodies the hope of the Church.

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we

which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv:16, 17).

And Paul, who received this great revelation, seems to have passed through some such experience as a prophetic type of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, which some blessed day will be caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so it will be. The dead in Christ will come forth first, and we, the living, will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Then we shall see Him as He is. Then we shall hear the unspeakable words which Paul heard, and behold the unspeakable glory of the Lord. Oh! how even the writing of these blessed truths, in feeble words, make the heart long for "that day."

Let us remember, beloved: An *unspeakable Gift,* the Son of God; an *unspeakable joy,* as we know Him and walk with Him; an *unspeakable glory* which comes when He calls us home.

His Face and Glory

WHEN Moses was in the presence of the Lord, he said to Him, "I beseech Thee show me Thy Glory." Moses also desired to see His face and the Lord said, "Thou canst not see my face"—"my face shall not be seen" (Exod. xxxiii:18-23). He looked and saw but the back of the departing Lord. And when Moses came down from Mount Sinai his face shown so that he had to put a veil upon his face. But it was not a permanent glory, it was a vanishing glory; it disappeared.

The Lord who talked with Moses, whose Glory he reflected for a time, and whose face he could not see was the

Son of God. It was He who descended in a cloud and passing by Moses proclaimed the name of Jehovah as "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." And Moses uttered then a prayer, "O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance" (Exod. xxxiv:5-9). And this Lord came to His own and His own received Him not. The Word, Jehovah, the Son of God was made flesh and dwelt among men, and the inspired witness tells us "we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth" (John i:14). And again "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us" (1 John i:2). And He appeared to be the propitiation for our sins. The death of the cross alone could accomplish this. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv:10). "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." "And it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins." Therefore Jehovah, God the Son, came from heaven to do the work He alone could do, to give His life a ransom for many. "He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." And believing on Him we know that in Him "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. i:7). Blessed truths and blessed facts! It is needful that we remind ourselves of this continually, for we are living in days when these fundamental doctrines are denied and obscured.

We are living in days when many, who profess these truths and knew their power once, are losing the reality and heart enjoyment of the Gospel. Oh, to meditate daily on what He is and what He has done for us! Oh, to drink anew at the fountain of His love, which passeth knowledge and thus walk in His fellowship! How soon our hearts grow cold and we do not enjoy Him and His salvation as we should. With the Laodicean spirit all about us, not decreasing, but increasing, with Satan's forces rapidly advancing and preparing for the final apostasy, we need to be on our guard, and watch and pray as never before.

And what is before us? So near, so very near! Moses could not see His face nor could He receive His Glory. The Law could not bring man to see His face and become an eternal partaker of His Glory. But grace has accomplished it. We can pray to see His face and to behold His Glory, for we know this is promised unto us. "We shall see Him as He is" (1 John iii:2). And again it is written, "They shall see His face" (Rev. xxii:4). The heart which loves Him beats faster as we think of the blessed and unspeakable moment when we shall see His face, the face which was marred for us and dishonored on account of our sins, the face which the face of Glory now in God's own presence.

Beloved reader, take often during the day a few quiet moments and say to yourself, "I shall see Him as He is"—"I shall see His face." It will surely be like a refreshing drink of water to your soul and the Holy Spirit will fill your soul with joy. To be with Him, to see His face and to behold His glory was His prayer for His own before He left the world to be with the Father (John xvii:24). And still He prays for this glorious future of His redeemed people. And He longs to see us in His presence. It is a precious

verse to simple faith and to a loving heart which seeks Him in the words, the verse we find in Solomon's song, "O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the secret of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely" (Song of Sol. ii:14). He wants us to be with Him and some day we shall see His face. Then we shall receive His Glory, not a vanishing, a diminishing glory, but an eternal, an abiding Glory. It is His own Glory the Father gave to Him, which we shall share forever with Him. Our blessed eternal destiny is "His Face and His Glory." May the Holy Spirit so govern our thoughts that we daily remember 'His face and His Glory." Then we shall walk worthy of Him.

"Lord, to be with thee in thine own abode,
The place prepared where thou wilt have us dwell,
Brought home unto thy Father and thy God,
Where harpers harping shall thy triumphs tell.
Sons of His love! heirs of his festal joy!
What bliss! how full, how pure beyond alloy!

To gaze around in that effulgent light,
With not a mist from earth to intervene;
Thy majesty, thy beauty, full in sight;
Thy glory flooding all the boundless scene;
Thy love in its perfection, known at last—
'Twill solve the long enigma of the past."

Essential and Acquired

IT IS important to distinguish between the essential glories of our Lord Jesus Christ and the glories which He acquired. He is God. One hears often in these days of the divinity of our Lord. But the people who use this term

never say Lord, but use His earthly name, His name in humiliation; they speak of "the divinity of Jesus." And then they inform us that every other human being is divine. This is the miserable delusion of the so-called new theology, that bloodless gospel upon which the Spirit of God has pronounced an anathema. Our Lord is not divine in that sense, but He is God. We who desire to honor Him do well to use the right words and always speak of the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In His Deity the eternal Word possesses essential glories. Of these we read in the Holy Scriptures. He is the image of the invisible God, because what God is He is and ever has been. He is the brightness of His Glory and the express image of His person (Col. i:15; Heb. i:3). What all His essential glories are, in which they consist, no human mind can fathom. The Glory of God is the Glory of the Only Begotten. In His high-priestly prayer He speaks of that Glory. "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the Glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John xvii:5). This essential Glory belongs to Him; no created being, no angel, no redeemed creature can ever share that Glory with Him. The essential Glory of the eternal Son of God is incommunicable.

When He came to the earth in the creature's form He laid His Glory by. His Deity He could not leave behind. And yet He also possessed Glory in His humiliation. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth" (John i:14). What Glory is revealed in His incarnation and His blessed life on earth! Yet He hid that Glory and only occasionally it flashed forth.

But there is another Glory which belongs to Him. A Glory which He acquired by His obedience unto death, the

death of the cross. That acquired Glory is communicable. He acquired that Glory that those for whom He died and who accept Him as their Saviour and Lord, may be sharers of it. We quote a few of the blessed portions of God's Holy Word which bear witness to this truth. "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name" (Phil ii:6-9).

He became man and became obedient, and as a result the God-man received from the Father a Name which is above every name. Oh! that worthy and matchless Name! "Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the Word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (Heb. i:2-4). Here is a marvellous blending together of His essential and acquired Glory. He, who created all things, by whom all things were made and by whom all things exist, receives all things as an inheritance because He made purification of sins and finished the work the Father gave Him to do. He is the Heir of all things. He fills the throne in the highest heaven. He is above the angels in every way. He created them; then was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, and now He is above the angels, crowned with glory and honor.

He has also acquired the Glory of Priesthood. "Where-

fore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb. ii:17). "Though He were a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him; saluted of God an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb. v:8-10). All this He became because He suffered and died according to God's will. Moreover, He became the Prince of the kings of the earth. The Father hath made Him King of kings and Lord of lords. The kingdoms of this earth shall be put into His hands. He has the right to ask for the nations to be His inheritance and for the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession (Psa. ii). Up to now He has not yet claimed what is His own. Some day He will, and then He will receive that for which He paid with His blood.

Another glory He acquired is that of Judge. In anticipation of His death and resurrection He said, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John v:22). "He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts xvii:31). Throughout the New Testament we find the blessed truth made prominent, that He, who is God and who became Man to redeem sinners, received Glory. "God raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory" (1 Peter i:21).

This acquired Glory of our Lord is sevenfold. He is the *First-begotten Son* of God by resurrection from the dead. He is the *Heir* of all things. He possesses a *Name* that is

above every name. He occupies the *Father's Throne,* seated in the highest heaven and is there crowned with Glory and Honor as the Head of the church. He has been made *Priest;* He is *King* and He is *Judge.* How feebly our hearts enter into all this! How little we can grasp the fullest meaning of this sevenfold Glory which belongs to Him who has redeemed us and washed us in His own blood!

Yet it concerns every saint, every child of God. The acquired Glory of our Lord is the Glory which every saved sinner will share with Him. While this great truth, this wonderful truth, is fully made known by the Holy Spirit in the Church epistles, the Lord Himself stated it first of all. "The Glory thou hast given me I have given to them" (John xvii:22). He was still on earth when He uttered these words in the presence of His disciples. He looked beyond the cross. He saw the work finished. He beheld the empty tomb and the throne of Glory He would fill. And then He tells the Father what was known to Him before the foundation of the world, "The Glory thou hast given me I have given them." And thus it is, blessed be His Name!

We are *sons* with Him, *heirs* of God and fellow-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. We shall see His face and *His Name* shall be in our foreheads (Rev. xxii:4). We are *seated* in Him in the heavenly places and shall be with Him. He hath made us *priests* and *kings* unto God His Father. We shall reign with Him over the earth. Yea, judgment even will be shared with Him by His saints. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? . . . know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (1 Cor. vi:2, 3).

It is all, like Himself, wonderful. May His Spirit give us power to enter into these things. The acquired Glory of Christ and our participation in it is Christianity's highest

and best. It will lead us into that life worthy of our calling and worthy of our Lord. Paul lived and moved in that, and therefore he cried out, with the passion of the new nature, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." May all our hearts be filled with this longing. With such a destiny before us, what manner of men and women we should be!

The All-Sufficient One

OUR years come and go; all about us is changing, there is nothing permanent in this world, all is subject to change and decay. But One never changeth; He abideth and is always the same. Our blessed and adorable Lord remaineth as He is and as He always has been and always will be. What He said to Joshua long ago, is as true today as it was then—"I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." What Isaiah declared of Him has not been changed since then "He shall not fail nor be discouraged."

All His promises are as unchangeable as He is. Several thousand years ago He spoke to His people through His chosen instrument words of cheer and of comfort. "Fear not, I will help thee."—"Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea I will help thee; yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." He still speaks thus to His own and assures them of His faithfulness and of His power. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. Of Him it is written, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thy

hands. They shall perish, but Thou remainest; and they shall wax old as does a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed, but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail" (Heb. i:10-12). As our years come and go and the end of our earthly pilgrimage draws nearer, our need, as His people, is to draw closer to Himself and to find our all, our joy, our help, our strength and our comfort only in Him. He is the All-Sufficient One, the Christ who is enough.

He is our All-sufficient Saviour. We found Him so when we turned to Him with the burden of our sins. His all-sufficiency to save is the result of His work on the cross. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, dying as the just One for the unjust, being made sin for us that we might be the righteousness of God in Him. "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth and maketh intercession for them" (Heb. vii:25).

He is all-sufficient for victory over our foes. The conflict in which we are engaged as His children does not lessen. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of this world, but against the wicked spirits in the heavenly places." As the end approaches these powers become increasingly active, till the time comes, which seems to be so near, when the true church will be called to her heavenly home, and Satan will demonstrate his vicious power through the demon world. Then he manifests great wrath for he knows that his time is short (Rev. xii:12). Never before has he been so active as today with his deceptive wiles. The flesh and the world are also the means he uses to ensnare the children of God. Defeat in this conflict in which we are engaged is not necessary. We can be victors, yea more than conquerors

through Him who has loved us. Our carnal man was crucified with Him, we can reckon ourselves dead unto sin, and He assures us "Sin shall not have dominion over you." All our enemies were defeated by Him. He conquered the powers of darkness and therefore we read that when we resist the devil he will flee from us. He also has overcome the world and our faith is the victory which overcomes the world. The victorious life is a simple matter. He has won every victory and by looking to Him, our risen, glorified Lord, as Israel's hosts in battle against their perpetual foe, Amalek, looked to Moses on the mountain-top, thus conquering the enemy, we too shall have the victory. He is all-sufficient in every battle; all-sufficient for victory.

He is enough for the sorrows, trials and troubles of His people. He is all-sufficient to sustain us in all circumstances, in the perplexing experience often so mysterious. He announced beforehand that His own should have tribulations in the world. Tribulations, suffering and persecutions are repeatedly announced by the Holy Spirit as the lot of God's children in this present evil age. The choicest saints have often been suffering saints. It is so still and always will be so.

Often the sufferings and trials of God's children are unexplainable; they are mysteries which we cannot fully understand now. But this thing we know, "That all things must work together for good," and we also know that He is able to carry us through every trial and sorrow and sustain us in every tribulation and bereavement. He is the same today as He was when His chosen people were suffering in Egypt. He knows, He sees and He hears (Exod. iii). He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, for He was also tested in the same way in all things, apart from sin. He enters into all our sorrows and is with us in every fiery trial.

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isa. xliii:2). He is Himself afflicted in all our afflictions (Isa. lxiii:9). Well may we sing triumphantly, "Hallelujah, what a Saviour!" Nor do we need to fear anything concerning the future. "I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me."

He is all-sufficient for every spiritual need we may have. He is the fountain which never runs dry. He is the inexhaustible reservoir filled with the supplies of His infinite grace. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. i:3). "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of God bodily. And ye are filled full in Him who is the head of all principality and power" (Col. ii:9,10). "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. viii:32). "And of His fulness have we all received grace upon grace" (John i:16). Whatever our spiritual need may be we but need to turn to Him and find Him all-sufficient, as well as ever ready to supply that need.

In a certain hymn we sing, "Christ alone can satisfy." To the woman at the well He said, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give Him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life" (John iv:13,14). All earthly, physical things, the best, the choicest, the most attractive, the most charming, can never satisfy the human soul. All earthly cisterns are but broken, empty things. He alone can

give what satisfies and if we drink of Him, and drink deep, we shall find that we thirst no longer for the things which are for but a moment, and which can never satisfy. A child of God may be in an impoverished condition, but even then, without earthly comforts, having Christ as his portion is enough. Like the poor woman who laid upon a bed of sickness and in want, when she was asked what her needs were, she answered "I have Christ, what need I more?" He is enough.

And what will it be when we are at last with Him! In eternity we shall be in His fellowship in never-ending glory. May we then find Him daily the all-sufficient One. This is our need and in this is our strength.

"Leaning, resting, trusting, loving,
Enter thy new year!
For the Lord who lives to love thee
Will be always near,
Shielding, guiding, caring, blessing!
What hast thou to fear?"

The Praying Christ

WE can never make too much of prayer, that blessed privilege which belongs to the family of God—prayer by which we draw nigh to our Father in that blessed and worthy Name—prayer, the expression of our dependence on Him.

How much has been written on prayer! Exhortation to pray much, to pray still more, to pray without ceasing, to pray fervently, to pray lifting up holy hands is always in order; that is according to sound doctrine and the teaching of God's Holy Spirit. But we do not think enough of our

Lord in connection with prayer. The words He spoke concerning prayer are constantly to be remembered. Above all must we think of His own prayers.

The praying Christ! What a man of prayer He was as He walked this earth in the form of a servant! What help and comfort there is for us as we think of Him in His blessed prayer life on earth! He is our pattern in this as He is in all His walk. And still greater is the comfort when we consider that His prayers were not ended with His earthly life. They are continued in glory. We have not only a praying Christ on earth, but a praying Lord in glory. His blessed lips still make requests of His Father. As the great intercessor He is upon the throne. And some day His prayers will all be answered.

Much of the prayer life of our Lord is pre-written in that book of prayer and praise to which He so often referred while on earth, the book of Psalms. The Psalms may well be called the prayer book of the Lord Jesus Christ. Many of the utterances expressing dependence, loneliness, poverty, sorrow, grief, rejection and reproach were written by the Holy Spirit in anticipation of His life of humiliation. When He who was rich became poor for our sakes these prayers were used by Him. He expressed His obedience, His trust, His loneliness in a world which hated Him, His soul agony and suffering in the inspired words of the Psalms. This was pre-written in one of them, "My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee and will look up" (Psa. v:3); and in the Gospel we read, "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out into a solitary place and there prayed" (Mark i:35). And again, "He went into a mountain apart to pray, and when the evening was come He was there alone (Matt. xiv:23). "He went out into a

mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer (Luke vi:12.)

Prayer was constantly in that perfect life. He prayed when He was baptized by John in the river Jordan (Luke iii:21). Prayer preceded His transfiguration; "as He prayed His countenance was altered" (Luke ix:29). Before He chose His apostles He spent a night in prayer. He prayed as the cross and its suffering loomed up (John xii:27). In the garden of Gethsemane we see Him praying with strong crying and tears (Heb. v:7). He kneeled down and prayed; "He fell on the ground, being in agony He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground (Mark xiv:35). The One-hundred-and-second Psalm contains the prediction of that prayer of agony. He taught, "Pray for them who despitefully use you" (Luke vi:28). He did so Himself and fulfilled Psalm cix:4, "For my love they are my adversaries, but I gave myself unto prayer." He prayed for His enemies on the cross, as it is written, "He was numbered with the transgressors and He bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. liii:12). But who can sound the depths of that blessed prayer-life of the Son of God on earth and the things He might have asked of God! "Thinkest thou not that I cannot now pray to my Father and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (Matt. xxvi:53). What a submission and what an example for us!

Before He left the world to go back to the Father He assured His disciples (and us as well) that He would pray for them. "I will pray the Father for you." Finally they listened to His prayer when He addressed the Father (John xvii), and we also hear Him pray as the eleven disciples did

whenever we read that matchless chapter. That prayer is well called His "high-priestly prayer." It is the example of His priestly ministry in glory. It gives a glimpse of His loving heart, which, in love that passeth knowledge, is constantly occupied with those whom He redeemed by His sacrificial death. He is the great, the never-failing intercessor for His people. After all, our keeping for eternal life and glory does not depend on our weak prayers down here, but on His prayer and priestly intercession. He keeps us and all who truly are His. His life up yonder saves us down here. Because He knows us and bears us upon His loving heart, He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities and enters in loving, gracious sympathy into our lives. We can come to Him with all our burdens, for He is the burden bearer. We can tell Him of all our cares, for He careth. We can tell Him all about our sorrows and trials, failures and disappointments, perplexities and heartaches. He is ever ready to listen to us.

In these days of suffering and weeping, when His dear people moan and groan, when loss and bereavement is the lot of countless numbers of His children, what activity there must be in heaven! How He does intercede! Well may we all, and all who suffer and groan, expect the manifestation of His gracious love and power in our trials, as the result and answer, not of our prayers only, but of His prevailing prayer. Blessed be His Name! the darker the days the greater His power to save and to keep. Just think of the praying Christ in glory.

We do not know what may go on in glory, in the Father's house. Heaven knows all that is going on down here on this earth, blood drenched as never before in its history. Carried upward by His Spirit, human voices cry in His loving ears, "How long, O Lord! How long!" and again,

"Come, Lord Jesus—come, Lord Jesus." For all we know He is pleading now as He did on earth, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which Thou hast given me" (John xxii:24). And the Father, who heareth Him always, will grant Him the desire of His heart and not withhold the request of His lips. That prayer will be answered. The shout, the glorious shout from His own lips, will summon His own to meet Him in the sky. In a moment—the twinkling of an eye!

Once more He will pray. The Father has told Him, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt smite them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Psa. ii). He has never yet prayed thus. Some day He will ask the Father for His inheritance, the nations and the uttermost parts of the earth. When that prayer is answered He will return in His glory and receive the kingdoms of the earth. He is earth's future King. The kingdom will be established on this earth. Nations will learn war no more. Peace, peace with righteousness, has come. All things are put under His feet. Groaning creation is delivered. He is on the throne and Satan in the pit of abyss. Let us think of the prayers of Christ and that His prayers for His own, for this earth, for the kingdom will all be answered.

The Sower and the Reaper

"THEY that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing His sheaves

with him" (Psa. cxxvi:5, 6). Our blessed Lord came to earth as the great sower and as the Son of Man sowed the good seed (Matt. xiii:37). He came forth from heaven's glory, bearing the precious seed; and sowing, He wept, and weeping, He sowed in tears. Who can describe the wonderful service with which He served, the way in which He sowed! See Him at Samaria's well! In the heat of the day He had gone the weary way because He knew the one in whose heart the precious seed was to find lodgment. And being wearied with His journey He sat on the well. Then she came, whom He knew so well, whose history of sin and shame was like an open book to Him who has eyes like a flame of fire.

Such was the ground which received the precious seed a heart desperately wicked, like all human hearts. And while the rejoicing woman rushed back to the city to tell the good news, the disciples said, "Master, eat!" "But He said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. . . . My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work. Say not ye, There are yet four months and then comes the harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" (John iv:32-36). Even so was it His meat to do the Father's will, sowing by making Him known, and doing His works.

But the great sowing was done by Him when He went to the Cross. The great sower was rejected. He who brought God to man, making known the invisible God, He who said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," was cast out by man and put on the cross. There He had to finish the work for which He came. On the cross He Himself was

sown in death, so that there might be the reaping of glory, the harvest of redemption. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit" (John xii:24). He is the corn of wheat, the precious seed. He came to die, to give His life a ransom for many, and from this springs the great harvest, the blessed and glorious fruit. All who have believed on Him are the precious fruit of His death on the cross. And how this fruit has been gathered and is being gathered by the power of the Holy Spirit, who is on earth for this great purpose! He who sowed in tears reaps now in joy. When He went to the cross to give His body as the great sacrifice, He saw His seed, He saw the travail of His soul, He saw the church and all its members, and then loving the church He gave Himself for it (Eph. v:25). That was the joy set before Him for which He endured the cross and despised the shame. What joy is His as member after member is added to this body, destined to be with Him and to share His Glory!

But more than that: "He shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Harvest time is coming for the great Sower. He has told us that the harvest time is the end of the age. Then He will be the great reaper, the ingatherer. The wheat, the children of the kingdom, will be gathered into His barn (Matt. xiii:30). He comes and takes His own, the fruit of His sowing, home to glory—home to the Father's house to be with Him. Then also comes the harvest which belongs to Him as the Son of Man, the appointed executor of the judgments of God. How solemn is the record! "And I looked and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple,

crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap; for the time is come for Thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped" (Rev. xiv:14-16). What a harvest that will be! How the enemies of God and of His Christ will then be dealt with and all those who destroyed the truth of God will meet their well-merited judgment. "And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations; and He shall rule them with a rod of iron, and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Rev. xix:15). It will be harvest time then and this earth and the nations are fast ripening for such a harvest.

And what will it be when the great sower, who sowed in tears, who gave His life and shed His blood, comes again with rejoicing, bringing His sheaves with Him! What joy and glory will be His when the portals of heaven open and He leads forth the ransomed hosts of God! What joy and glory when He appears as the head of the body, the Lord of all, and every member of His body reflects His own glory! What will it be when He brings the many sons to glory, when He brings His glorious sheaves with Him! Oh, that will be glory for Him! Then He has to the full the travail of His soul and will be satisfied, and what glory it will be for us the trophies of His victory and His grace!

We shall then forever be with Him, behold His glory, share that glory and His vast and wonderful inheritance. And do not our hearts yearn for this? There seems to be a universal desire among the Saints of God, those who know Him best and love His appearing, for His speedy coming. Oh, the many hearts who cry today for this promised event! But let us remember that while He tarries it is sowing time

for us. We still may sow and follow Him, in sowing the precious seed with tears. We can still sow beside many waters, preach the Word and reach out for the lost. We can go forth trusting Him, and sow with many tears and many prayers that which He has first put into our hands. Blessed privilege it is. And if we would only think more of Him who has gone before, and is coming again bringing His sheaves with Him; if we only would think more of the soon coming glorious consummation, of the harvest time the reaping time for Him and for us, how much more sowing we would do, and how much more we would water the seed with the tears of our prayers. Still it is sowing time for us. Let us make the best of it and remember what the Spirit of God tells us: "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. ix:6). And again, "Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. vi:9). "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the works of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. xv:58). And what shall your harvest be, beloved reader, in that day? It depends on your faithfulness, on your self-denial, on your sacrifice now.

"He Is Thy Lord"

"HEARKEN, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him." (Psa.

xlv:9,10). This beautiful Psalm, so blessedly deep, reveals to us the King Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. We brush aside the vain babblings of critical and infidel men, whose inventions under the guise of scholarship have denied this. Even the most ancient Jewish commentators have always held that this inspired song shows forth the victorious, glorious King of Israel. But there is a higher authority than ancient Jewish comment and that is the Holy Spirit, who put these words into "the pen of the ready writer," and who tells us in the New Testament that He who is addressed as King with a sceptre of righteousness is our Lord (Heb. i:7-9).

And what a wonderful picture it is we face in the opening verses of this Psalm! He is fairer far than the sons of men. Some ancient versions of the Old Testament have rendered it by "Beautiful! Beautiful!" a double exclamation in place of "fairer far." And so He is "altogether lovely"! Grace is poured into His lips. Then we behold Him as the coming One, the victorious King, with the sword at His thigh, appearing in glory and majesty. He comes to execute judgment, because the grace which poured from His lips was rejected by man. He comes "in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. i:8). He comes to receive the throne and the kingdom; the sceptre of righteousness will henceforth rule.

But He is not alone. He has fellows, those who are associated with Him; who are partakers with Him in the glory and the kingdom. His associates are "His saints," those who come with Him, who are manifested with Him in glory. And every child of God saved by grace, belonging to Him, can say in fullest assurance, even as our own heart speaks in penning these words, "I shall be there." And after

that we hear of the Queen arrayed in gold of Ophir. She occupies the place of honor at His right hand. With her are the King's daughters. The Queen is the remnant of Israel, saved by grace, when the King comes back; reinstituted into the former relationship, taken back as the wife once set aside. The King's daughters, who surround the Queen, converted Israel, are the converted nations. It is a great vision of Millennial times. Israel is re-married unto the Lord and the nations of the earth are joined unto the Lord, the subjects in His kingdom.

But while this is true, this earthly scene and relationship of converted Israel is a type also of another heavenly scene and heavenly relationship. The Church is not only His Body, but His Bride as well. Her destiny is to become in Glory the Lamb's wife. While converted Israel is joined to the Lord in an earthly relationship, with the throne on earth, the Church is joined to the Lord in a heavenly relationship, with the throne over the earth in the New Jerusalem. Israel becomes the Queen on earth; the Church, at the marriage supper of the Lamb, becomes the Lamb's wife in heaven. Before the earth celebrates the glad and glorious day there precedes another celebration in Glory. "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of many thunderings, saying, Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." (Rev. xix:6-8). These are the nuptials of the Church in Glory.

It is the exhortation to her who has been lifted so high which attracts our attention. She is to forget her kindred,

her people, her father's house, all what is behind and past; she must be given wholly and fully to Him. "He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him." He claims the entire affection, as well as the adoration and worship of the heart. This will be His loving demand of Israel; this is His loving claim on us. He is thy Lord—worship thou Him! And every heart who knows Him answers joyfully, Thou art worthy! Thou art all! Thou art all for me; I want to be all for Thee. "Thou, O Christ, art all I want—more than all in Thee I find." Yet how little we know of this in a practical way. We quote the words of another:

"A simple truth, therefore, this should be to the Christian, and scarcely needing much enforcement. Yet it *does* need. How few of those who have turned to Him, yea, and found answer from Him, in the deepest need of their souls, have yet frankly taken Him for all other needs! How many have to find cistern after cistern of their own cracked in the hewing, before they apply themselves in full earnest to their own free fountain of living water! How little is it understood that Christ and *nothing else* will more than satisfy, when Christ and a great deal else to supplement Him will only bring one down to near starvation! Yet should it be difficult to see that a Christ honored and trusted as all-competent will justify that trust, when a Christ dishonored by other makeweights will seem to justify nothing but the *dis*trust?"—Frederick W. Grant.

Somehow these words have been ringing in our own heart: *"He is thy Lord, worship thou Him."* Are they not of special meaning in these solemn days? A few steps more and we may be face to face with Him. Oh! Let us in faith realize His Lordship over us as never before. Let us give Him the pre-eminence in our little lives and seek and find in Him our all in all. He is thy Lord; we are not our own;

we belong to Him. Let Him exercise His blessed Lordship over our lives *in all things*. He is thy Lord—let us trust Him. He is thy Lord—let us serve Him. He is thy Lord —let us magnify and exalt His holy and ever blessed Name. And worship thou Him! Oh! sweetest of all hours on earth when our hearts are bowed in worship and we praise Him. It is after all the highest and the best to worship. Feeble it is; but the day is nearing when we shall know what it means—"He is thy Lord"—and when we shall worship in His presence.

"All My Springs Are in Thee"

"ALL my springs are in Thee" (Psa. lxxxvii:7). The earthly Zion in its future glory, when the Lord has come and Israel is restored, is in view in this Psalm. Then "the singers as well as the players on instruments shall say—all my springs are in Thee." While this is not yet come, God's children know now the blessed truth expressed in these words. In Him, in the Lord Jesus Christ, are all our springs.

All we have is in Christ; all we are is through Him and all we shall be will be in Him, through Him and with Him. And therefore we rejoice and can sing, "All my springs are in Thee." In whom? In Him "who loved me and gave Himself for me." In Him who is raised from the dead and seated at God's right hand in the highest glory, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named. In Him who has all power in heaven and on earth. In Him, in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily. In Him under whose feet all

things are yet to be put and who will ere long be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. In such a One, wonderful, almighty, omniscient, all-loving and all-glorious, are all our springs. To know Him means a never failing and a never ending supply of all we need in time and in eternity. Apart from Him there is nothing but death.

"All my springs are in Thee." He is our Saviour, who bore our sins on the shameful cross, by whose precious blood, the blood as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, we are redeemed. He paid the price of our redemption and set us free. Having believed on Him as our Saviour and being redeemed, He is our Lord whose we are; we are His servants. He is also our Shepherd, who careth for us His sheep for whom He laid down His life. He is our Life as well as our Food. He is our Priest and our Advocate. He is our Peace, our Pattern and our Hope. He is all in all. And He is altogether lovely. In Him we find all. His fullness can never be exhausted. He is the fountain of living waters and all other things in this poor world are but broken cisterns that hold no water.

And do we really find in Him and in Him only, all our springs? Or are you, dear reader, still going to broken cisterns? Do you find in Him more and more your joy and delight? Is He all your comfort, your strength and your hope? Do you realize your complete need of Him as never before? Are you living in greater dependence on Him and is your heart more longing for Him, more devoted to Him? These are searching questions. Oh! that we might learn that it is just Himself we need, in whom are all our springs. What would we do without Him? Such is the cry of the soul which leans hard upon Him. What a comfort He is in conflict; what a help in present-day difficulties and perplexities! And what a sustainer in sorrow! Oh! the springs

of joy, peace and hope which flow forth from His blessed person! To Him we cling closer—Him our souls love and desire. Yet a little while, a very little while, and we shall know as we never knew down here that all our springs are in Him.

"Take thou our hearts, and let them be
Forever closed to all but Thee;
Thy willing servants, let us wear
The seal of love forever there.

How blest are they who still abide
Close sheltered at Thy loving side;
Who life and strength from Thee receive,
And with Thee move and in Thee live."

"As He that Serveth"

"I AM among you as He that serveth" (Luke xxii:27). These were His words spoken under the shadow of the Cross. He had come to earth to be a servant. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made of Himself no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in likeness of men" (Phil. ii:6,7).

It is the wonder of wonders that the mighty Creator should lay His glory by and appear on earth as a servant, that He who was rich became poor for our sakes. Prophets had predicted His servant character long before He became incarnate. "Behold my servant! He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench; He shall bring forth judgment unto truth" (Isa. xlii:2,3). He is called "My righteous Servant" (Isa.

liii:11). We hear Him say in the spirit of prophecy, "Thou has made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities" (Isa. xliii:24). The Gospel records give us the story of His perfect service. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life as a ransom for many (Mark x:43). What a service it was! Ever going about and doing good, healing the sick, and speaking words of love, comfort, and peace. How untiring instant in season and out of season! From early in the morning, before sunrise till late at night, with whole nights spent in prayer service, He toiled and served. How unostentatious! It was the mighty eternal love, the love that passeth knowledge which constrained His holy soul. In this service of love He went the weary road through Samaria to seek at the well the lost woman whose sinful story He knew so well. In the same love He took up the little children in His arms and blessed them. It was this loving service which carried the weak and erring disciples and stooped so low as to wash their feet. Brief are the records describing the wonderful life He lived as the obedient servant. Though brief all the Holy Spirit reveals is like Himself unsearchable. One can always discover something new, a new beauty, a new loveliness, something unseen and unknown before. How great His attractiveness to the believers' heart! To follow His path, to trace His blessed steps of meekness and lowliness, is always inspiring and refreshing to the heart that knows and adores Him.

And the greatest of all when that holy, obedient, loving, never-failing servant went to the cross to give His life as a ransom for many. What saint can measure the height, the length, the breadth and the depth of this surpassing service of eternal love! "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken,

smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed" (Isa. liii:4,5).

Nor was His service finished for the objects of His love, for His own, when He had bowed His blessed head and uttered the never-dying words, "It is finished." At the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels and principalities having been made subject unto Him, He continues to serve. As priest and advocate for each trusting heart on earth He serves, keeping, sustaining, restoring at all times. How little we know of this love-service which is going on above. What a revelation it will be in that day, when the hidden, now unknown service of our interceding Lord will come to light! Then we shall find out what that never-ceasing service in heaven's courts meant for each of us. How much He prevented in our lives which we never knew here below! How many snares and attacks of our foe He frustrated! How many things He restrained by His intercession! And then His service in restoring us poor, weak ones on earth, thus keeping us in His fellowship. If His service was so untiring on earth, how much more so is it in glory. And oh, the joy to know, He does all things well! We rest in faith in Him who knows all and who has all power, whose thoughts over us are nothing but love and peace.

And when at last we shall see His face, when that blissful, long-looked-for moment comes, when we shall see Him as He is in all His heavenly glory, when we shall be transformed into the same image, even then His loving service will continue. We listen to His own words. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He will return on occasion of the wedding; that when He cometh and

knocketh, they may open unto Him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching; verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them" (Luke xii:34-37).

He shall gird Himself, and make them sit down and will come forth to serve them. What will it all mean? We do not know at this time. We do not know what it will be when He comes forth to serve once more those whom He has brought to the Father's house by His sacrificial death, who are the travail of His soul and His crown of rejoicing. He will have a great surprise for us at that blessed marriage supper of the Lamb.

And does not all this create a deeper longing in your soul, beloved reader, to follow Him and to be a real servant after Him, in meekness and lowliness, in self-denial and self-surrender? "Ye serve the Lord Christ." How easy and blessed such service is if He Himself is before our hearts. With what delight, contentment and peace we can go in our own little way, if we do not take off our eyes from His own blessed person. To serve Him, to serve in love one another, to bear one another's burdens, to be humble, manifesting the same mind which was in Christ Jesus that is pleasing to the Father, yea, that gives perfect rest. Alas! the modern spirit which is pervading everything, aims at human greatness, at being something in a world in which Christ was nothing, ever seeking the applause of a world which hates Christ and serving for selfish ends. What an evil thing it is! How contrary to Him and to His service, this self-seeking, this ambition to have "a name"! True rest and peace is not known to the servant who is controlled by worldly ambitions. The Lord deliver us from it and keep us humble, serving with Him as our pattern, till before His

award seat the hidden things shall be manifested and every man shall have praise.

"Servant of all, to toil for man
Thou wouldst not, Lord, refuse:
Thy majesty did not disdain
To be employed for us.

Thy bright example I pursue,
To Thee in all things rise,
And all I think, or speak or do,
Is one great sacrifice."

"The Lord Always"

"I HAVE set the Lord always before me" (Psa. xvi:8). This Psalm gives a prophetic picture of Him who existed in the form of God and made of Himself no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant, who humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. We hear Him giving in this Psalm expression of His trust in God and to the certainty of His victory over death and the grave. Our blessed Lord walked down here in the path of obedience, and thus He had His Father always set before His heart. The path He has gone through this world He has graciously left for His redeemed people to follow. His own grace and the power of His Spirit, whom we have received as one of the blessed results of His finished work on the cross, make this following after Him possible. Thus all believers are enabled to say, "I have set the Lord always before me," and live daily and constantly with the Lord before the heart. Such a life is a life of blessing and victory, a life unto the praise of His Name, which yields abundant fruit.

We must have the Lord, first of all, before our hearts in His redeeming love. We were lost and He came to redeem us. "He loved me and gave Himself for me" is the song of worship of all who have been washed in His blood. All who know the price which was paid for redemption remember daily that He loved us and in His own body on the tree bore our sins. As the Lord who has accomplished our redemption we love to have Him before our hearts. That this might be so He left that blessed request before He went to the cross: "Do this in remembrance of me." The Lord's Supper was instituted by Him that we might keep Him before our hearts in a practical way. Each time we gather according to this request and worship in Spirit and in Truth, the Holy Spirit puts Him afresh before our hearts. We then taste His love again and receive new and blessed assurance that we belong to Him and He belongs to us. We need to get fresh glimpses of His great love so that we may increasingly appreciate Him and live out the salvation we have in Him. How it does melt the heart when we remember the fact that He bought us with His blood.

Centuries ago in Boston the leading of praise was given to a Judge Sewell. The "Bay Psalm Book" contained only a few tunes. But the good man found even the few tunes bewildering. In his diary, which is in existence, he reports his successes and his failures. Occasionally he thinks that he had "set a psalm well"; at other times he complains that the people ran away with the tune. But on a certain Sunday he says, "The song of the Fifth of Revelation was sung. I was ready to burst into tears at the words 'Bought with thy blood.'" Such loving remembrance of Him refreshes His heart and becomes a source of blessing in our lives.

We must have Him before our hearts as the One who walked on earth in humiliation, meek and lowly of heart. How blessed it is never to lose sight of Him in this character. His life is our pattern; to walk even as He walked is God's call to His redeemed people. Are there sorrows and trials? He passed through them too as the perfect One, in perfect submission and perfect patience. Are we misunderstood and wrongfully treated? This was His lot among a crooked and perverse generation. Are we in want and distress? He knows all about this for we see Him thus in His path on earth. Well may we have His life down here as the object of meditation before our hearts. And as we do we shall receive help and by the power of His Spirit reflect His image. How blessed it is to look back to His path on earth and thus receive courage and strength to follow after Him.

But we also have Him before our hearts as the One who is now crowned with glory and honor upon the Father's throne. He is there for us. His love is unchanged; His Power is on our side. While we have Him before our hearts as the glorified and living One, He has us upon His heart. He knows us and knows our needs and will supply them in His own way. To step on daily through this quickly passing age with the man in Glory before our hearts, telling Him our troubles, looking to Him for help, expecting all from Him and Him alone, and accepting all that comes into our lives as from Himself, that is the life we are called to live as His redeemed ones.

We must have Him before our hearts as the Coming One. Every night when we retire our last thought ought to be of Him and that before another morning comes we *may* meet Him. Every morning's first thought should be of Christ and that before another evening appears He *may* come. If

He is before us in this way, in reality, it will be a great blessing in our lives. Sorrows and trials will become insignificant. The future will then be left in His hands, while every day He gives us while waiting for Him to come, will be marked by untiring service and by doing good. Soon He will come and we shall meet Him face to face. Having the Lord before our hearts as the Coming One, whose glory we shall share and whose image we shall bear in all eternity will result in never losing sight of the Lord. Wherever we go, we look to Him to guide. Whatever we do, His honor and the glory of His Name becomes increasingly the desire of our hearts. In all we do, in our work, in the household duties, in service, in anything and everything, we will have but one object. He is before our hearts as Saviour and coming Lord, and that object will be to please Him. The Lord grant to us all such a walk in the last days. There is little time left to be faithful to Him. May we use it. Satan's power will hinder as never before in a life closely linked with Him; but He has conquered Satan. If we are willing His sufficient Grace will meet all our need. "I have set the Lord always before me."

Like the Rain

RAIN is frequently mentioned in the Word of God and used figuratively in different ways. It is used as a picture of adversity and judgment (Ezek. xxxviii:22) and of the outpouring of divine wrath upon the ungodly (Job xx:23). It is also used as a symbol of oppression: "A poor man that oppresseth the poor is like a sweeping rain which leaveth no food" (Prov. xxviii:3). And again says Solo-

mon: "A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike" (Prov. xxvii:15). But on the other hand rain is often used in Holy Scriptures as the emblem of good, the symbol of earthly and spiritual blessings. It is a picture of the Word of God. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my Word be that goeth forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it" (Isa. lv:10, 11).

In the Seventy-second Psalm our Lord Jesus Christ is compared in His second coming to the rain. This beautiful Kingdom psalm stands at the close of the second main division of the Book of Psalms (Psa. xlii-lxxii). Like the second book of the Bible, Exodus, these psalms describe a suffering, groaning people, prophetically the remnant of Israel during the coming great tribulation. And as Exodus ends with the glory of the Lord displayed in the midst of His people, so the second division of the Psalms ends with the vision of the Kingdom, when the Lord has returned and His glory covereth the earth.

"O God, give Thy judgments unto the King
And Thy righteousness unto the King's Son.
Thus shall He judge Thy people with righteousness
And of thine afflicted with judgment.
The mountains shall bring forth peace to the people,
And the hills in righteousness.
He shall judge the afflicted of the people,
Save the sons of the poor,
And crush the oppressor!
So that they fear Thee while the sun endureth,
And as long as the moon unto all generations.
He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass,
As showers that water the earth." (Verses 1-6, corrected trans.)

"He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth." It is a beautiful expression and a picture of the great blessings which are in store for man and for the earth when Creation's Lord and Redeemer comes again. It answers the unscriptural view that the second coming of Christ will usher in the end of the world, the destruction of the earth and the end of all things. The blessings the Seventy-second Psalm promises, blessings of peace for all the nations, their conversion and gathering into the kingdom, which includes the ends of the earth, as well as the temporal blessings, are still unrealized. Nor will they come during this age. His Second Coming will bring about all which is promised in this psalm and many other Scriptures.

When He comes He will come down like rain. The showers of blessing to refresh and to bring forth new life will come. David in his last words spoke of this also.

> "He shall be as the light of the morning
> When the sun ariseth,
> A morning without clouds—
> From the sunshine and from the rain
> The green grass springs from the earth." (2 Sam. xxiii:4.)

Think of the parched meadows. No rain has fallen for many weeks. The grass is withering away. The shrubs and trees drop their leaves. Death seems to be impending. Joel describes such a scene. "The field it wasteth, the land mourneth, for the corn is wasted, the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. . . . The seed is rotten under their clods; the garners are laid desolate; the barns are broken down, for the corn is withered. How the beasts do groan! The herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea the flocks of sheep are made desolate" (Joel i:10, 17, 18). But all at once the rain comes down. Showers upon

showers fall upon the thirsty ground. What a transformation follows! What a wonderful reviving these showers of blessing bring at once. And thus will it be when He comes down to earth again. The earth, before He comes, will be in the most dire need. Like the mown grass with its roots exposed to the summer heat, like the parched fields with threatening death on all sides, such will be the condition of the earth and its inhabitants when the present age ends.

But then He comes like rain upon the mown grass and brings the promised showers of blessing. What blessings there will be! Blessings for Israel, blessings for all the nations of the earth and blessings for groaning creation. Then righteousness and praise will spring forth before all the nations and the living waters flow forth from Jerusalem. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad and the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God" (Isa. xxxv:1, 2). "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree' (Isa. iv:13).

"The Curse is gone!
The Blessing comes instead;
And now, where'er we go,
On hallowed ground we tread.
The canopy of love
Is stretched above our head;
The soil no longer curst,
Is like a garden spread;
The wilderness re-blooms
With verdure overlaid.
The reign of right
Supplants the sway of wrong;

The reign of promised peace
To earth has come: the long,
Long era of the blest!
With now unloosed tongue
The nations utter praise;
Earth's broken harp is strung,
Creation now is glad,
And sings its ancient song."

In the Midst

HE IS in the midst! No child of God needs to be told who that One is. He was foreshadowed by the tree of life in the midst of the garden (Genesis ii:9), He, who is the life. He appeared unto Abraham accompanied by two angels at Mamre (Gen. xviii). We doubt not He was then in the middle, an angel on either side, when Abraham bowed himself to the ground and addressed Him as "my Lord." Moses saw Him in the burning bush and He called unto him "out of the midst of the bush," the ever blessed assurance that He is in the midst and with His suffering people. When Nebuchadnezzar looked into the white heat of the furnace he beheld in the midst of the three, who had been cast into the fire, a fourth one "like to the Son of God." He dwelt in the midst of His people Israel, in the midst of the cloud, the visible sign of His presence, in the midst of glory.

And when the Eternal and Glorious One, the Life and the Light, the Only-Begotten came to earth, to be the Lamb of God, to die for the ungodly, we behold Him in the midst. He was numbered with the transgressors; this was the voice of prophecy (Isa. liii:12). The same prophecy announced: "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not

His mouth; He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth." It was all fulfilled, when He gave Himself, enduring the cross and despising the shame. Oh, that scene can never be forgotten! It will be the theme of endless praise of all the redeemed throughout all eternity—He came to take the sinner's place. "And there were also two others, malefactors, led with Him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left." (Luke xxiii:32,33). How affecting to see Him, the Lord of Glory, by whom and for whom all things were created, the object of angelic worship, yea more than that, the Father's delight, led forth with vile malefatcors, to be cruelly nailed to the cross! Who can picture that scene—the Holy One in the midst of wicked men, hanging on the cross, shedding His blood! Why is He there? Because man hating Him gave Him that place. Why is He there? He came to take that place. His love brought Him from heaven to earth and led Him to that place "in the midst." Why is He there? God put Him there, for He made Him, who knew no sin, sin for us.

It was decree of eternity. The cross was not an *afterthought* of God. It was God's *forethought*. Before there ever was a world it was councilled that He should be "in the midst," to make known God's love and God's power in redemption.

His blood was shed. His head, thorn-crowned, had bowed. His lips had uttered the triumphant, majestic, "It is finished!" His side was pierced. The evidences of death were there as the eye-witness, the beloved John tells us—"But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John xix:34).

They took his body from the place "in the midst." They laid Him in the tomb. On the third day the grave was emptied, and on the same day we see Him "in the midst" again.

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto thm, Peace be unto you. And when He had said so, He showed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord" (John xx:19). We remember His blessed promise, recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, in anticipation of His death and resurrection, and the church He would have. The promise not given when He preached the Gospel of the Kingdom heralding the Kingdom promised to Israel, but that promise was spoken to His disciples after the message of the Kingdom had been rejected. "Where two or three are gathered together unto my name, there am I in the midst of them. On the glorious day of His mighty victory He fulfills that promise? They were gathered together. Suddenly He is in their midst, to greet them with the message of peace, to show them His hands and His side.

And He is still in the midst. Wherever two or three gather together in His Name, having believed on Him and owning no other name, than His own worthy Name, gathered unto Him, there He is still in the midst. In Hebrews 11:12 we read: "I will declare Thy Name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee." This leads us back to the Twenty-second Psalm, the Psalm in which first of all His atoning death is predicted. But then we read of the suffering ended and the glory begun—"I will declare Thy Name unto my brethren,

in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee." (Psa. xxii:22).

It was on that resurrection morning when He spoke for the first time of His disciple as being "His brethren."—"Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." Oh, blessed identification! He is not ashamed to call us brethren. And now as the First-born among many brethren He leads in the praises, in worship, and we redeemed by His blood, accepted in Him, one with Him sing the song of redemption and praises in His Name, rejoicing in Him and in His redemption. Such is true worship, gathered unto His Name, worshipping Him, singing that song, which He first sang—"He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praises unto our God."

And John saw Him in the midst. "I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breasts with a golden girdle" (Rev. i:13).

And we shall see Him ere long in the midst as it is so blessedly foretold in the Book of Revelation. Some day—and how near that day may be!—we too, like John in the isle of Patmos, shall hear the voice from the sky, the mighty shout, "Come up hither." Then we shall pass in and worship no longer on earth but before the throne, clothed in fine linen, seated upon thrones and ground. And then will burst the vision upon our glorified eyes, the vision for which even now the loving heart yearns and prays. "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain. . . ." He takes the book and then follows the Glory Song: "Thou are worthy to take the book, and

to open the seals thereof, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign over the earth" (Rev. v:7-10). In the midst in glory! Oh! the glory that awaits us to see Him in the midst." The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Rev. vii:17).

On earth, too, He will have the place in the midst. He will be in the midst of His people Israel and in the midst of Jerusalem. "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for lo, I come to dwell in the midst of thee saith the Lord. . . . I will dwell in the midst of thee" (Zech. ii:11,12). "I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called a city of Truth" (Zech. viii:3). Around that glorious center will be grouped the nations, who have turned their swords to plowshares, their spears into pruning hooks, saying: "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa. ii:1-4). The One in the midst will be the object of worship and of praise. He shall be King over all the earth. "All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him" (Psa. lxxii:11).

And this glorious Lord is our Lord, our friend, our all! Well may faith shout for joy and look forward in happy anticipation to the day when we shall be with Him, who is "in the midst."

"Lord of Saints! Thy ransomed own,
They the members—Thou the Head;
Speed the great deliverance,
First-Begotten of the dead.

King of Israel! Soon arise,
And rebuild Thy Salem's walls;
Gather Jacob's scattered flock;
Hear Thine Israel when they call

King of Glory! King of Heaven!
King of earth! Arise and reign;
All creation sighs for Thee;
Visit Thine own earth again.

King of Nations! claim this world
With its kingdoms for Thine own,
Raze each rebel fortress here.
Level every hostile throne."

The Son of David

THE first title given to our Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament is "the Son of David," and the last title mentioned in the Book of Revelation is "the root and offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."

It was a great moment in sacred history when David, the man after God's own heart, sat in his house with God's prophet Nathan at his side. The king confided in the prophet and expressed his desire to build a house for the Lord. Joyfully the prophet answered him with words of encouragement. "Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee" (2 Sam. vii). Nathan had spoken of himself; it was not the Lord's message. That night the Lord visited Nathan and gave him the message which he was to communicate to the king. Not David, according to the word from the Lord, was to build Him a house, but the Lord would make David a house. The Lord made a covenant with David, gave him great promises, the covenant and the promises of grace. All in that covenant and those

promises centers in David's Son. "He shall build a house for my name, for I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever. I will be His Father and He shall be my Son. If He commit iniquity I will chasten Him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men. . . . And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever." That this does not mean Solomon, but Christ, the Son of God incarnate as the offspring of David, is obvious. But some one may ask, "How can the words concerning iniquity be applied to Christ?" "If He commit iniquity I will chasten Him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men." Unfortunately this verse has been badly translated. It has been properly rendered as follows: "In His suffering for iniquity, I will chasten Him with the rod due to men, and with the stripes due to the children of Adam."

After David had listened to this gracious revelation, he went in and sat before the Lord. It seems that David had a special prayer room. Later, when his child was desperately ill, he went to that room; when his rebellious son Absalom had been killed, he went, lamenting his lost soul, to the same room. But now he went in to worship and to praise the Lord for His sovereign grace. He poured out his heart in giving thanks unto the Lord. One utterance is of great interest. David said, "And yet this was a small thing in Thine eyes, O God; for Thou hast also spoken of Thy servant's house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Lord God" (1 Chron. xvii:17). The last portion of this verse has been correctly translated by a Hebraist as follows: "Thou hast regarded me in the arrangement about the man who is to be from above." The man from above is Christ.

David evidently knew that he should be through the grace of God the progenitor of the promised Messiah, the Redeemer and King of Israel. He was a prophet and through him the Spirit of God revealed, as through no other instrument in Old Testament prophecy, the person, the work and the glory of Him who was to come from him according to the flesh (Rom. i:3). Peter on the day of Pentecost said of David, "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hades, neither His flesh did see corruption."

Nor did David speak only of His resurrection. He testified of Him as the Son of God and the Son of Man, made a little lower than the angels, (Psa. ii, viii). He spoke of His holy life of faith and trust, and that His body should not see corruption (Psa. xvi). He saw beforehand His suffering, the suffering of the cross. In that great prophetic psalm, the twenty-second, he beheld Him on the cross, forsaken of God, as the sin-bearer. He spoke as a prophet of all the details of the crucifixion. Greater still are his prophecies concerning his greater Son in His kingship and Kingdom. How marvellous are the predictions in the Forty-fifth and Seventy-second psalms! In the one hundred and tenth psalm, which our Lord quoted to His enemies and by which He silenced their questions, David speaks of Him who is His Son as his Lord, exalted to the right hand of God and destined to rule in Zion. Then there are many millennial prophecies in the psalms written by David through the Holy Spirit. These predict the glory, the peace, and the blessing which will prevail in His coming kingdom.

In other portions of the Old Testament we hear of the

Son of David and of His Kingdom. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is the name whereby He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness" (Jer. xxiii:5,6). "Thus saith the Lord, if ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers" (Jer. xxxiii:20,21).

Therefore the first title which our Lord bears in the New Testament is the title, the Son of David (Matt. i:1). It could not be otherwise in the beginning of the first Gospel, which is the Gospel of the Kingdom, the Jewish Gospel. In this Gospel He is revealed as the promised King, who came as the minister of the circumcision and offered Himself as the Son of David. Both the King and the Kingdom were rejected by the nation, even as David and the prophets had also predicted.

In the Gospel of Luke, the record which describes Him in His perfect manhood, we have the details of His birth. Joseph of the house of David was espoused to a virgin whose name was Mary. To this virgin of the house of David, living in poverty in Nazareth, the angel Gabriel came, announcing to her that she was the favored one through whom the age-long promise should be accomplished. "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give

unto Him the throne of his father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke i:30-33). And when she had come to Bethlehem, the city of David, and brought forth her firstborn Son, her virgin-born Son, an angel of the Lord heralded the glad news to the shepherds who kept watch over their flock that night. He said unto them, "Fear not: for behold, I bring good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke ii:11). The promise made to David in the covenant of a thousand years ago had now been fulfilled. David's Son and David's Lord had come.

He was known as the Son of David. The blind and the sick cried after Him, because they knew His power, "Have mercy on us, thou Son of David." Even a Gentile woman addressed Him thus, the Syro-Phoenician. To her He did not answer a word, for she had no claim on Him under this title. Not till she addressed Him in faith as Lord did He grant her request. They watched His mighty deeds of power and mercy, so that "all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?" (Matt. xii:23). It is the same as if they said, "Is not He the long promised King, who comes to bring us the kingdom, and take once more the throne of David?" And when He rode into Jerusalem, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, "Behold thy King cometh unto thee," the multitude that went before, and that followed after cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David," and even the children cried in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

Yet Gabriel's announcement to Mary concerning Him was only partly fulfilled. His name was called Jesus, as Gabriel had said. He was great and was called the Son of

the Highest, as Gabriel had said. The rest of his message is not fulfilled. The throne of His father David has not yet been His; nor does He reign over the sons of Jacob, the people Israel; nor has He His kingdom on earth, the kingdom into which all the nations are to be gathered. In other words, the great and many promises of the prophets of God concerning the Kingship and the Kingdom of the Messiah, the Son of David, await still their literal fulfillment.

That is why the disciples asked the risen Son of David the question, "Wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts i:6). He did not tell them that they were mistaken, that their hope in a kingdom, such as is promised to the Son of David, which David beheld in visions, is a false hope. He said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power."

The day must come when He receives the throne of His father David. The day must come when "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth," when "His enemies shall lick the dust," when "all nations shall serve Him" (Psa. lxxii). And the day will surely come, for God's gifts and calling are without repentance, and His oath-bound covenant with David can not fail. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, will receive the throne to which He is entitled, and with it He will receive the nations for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession.

From Acts xv:16 we learn that this will be accomplished with His personal return to this earth. He is at the right hand of God, upon the Father's throne. This is not His permanent place, for He must have His own throne. When He comes again He will claim His crown rights. Christen-

dom thinks during the month of His first coming, that He was born in Bethlehem. But few think of His second coming in power and great glory. As David was once rejected and crownless, so He is uncrowned, as far as the world is concerned. But the crowning day is coming! The day of His glory is not far away, when He will appear crowned with many crowns.

His Church does not wait for Him in His coming as King to take the throne of David, but His Church waits for Him as her Lord and her Bridegroom.

How soon that waiting may end! Then we shall all be gathered home and behold in glory how He, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, receives the seven-sealed book to begin His judgment work, which ends with His visible and glorious manifestation. Another year is gone, and as never before God's own can say, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." May we, then, be like men that wait for their Lord and have "our loins girt about and our lamps burning!" We know He will surely come, and that at a time when we think not. Even now He is at the door, for it is the fourth watch, and the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star, may soon arise.

His Kingship

WHEN the Lord Jesus Christ had revealed Himself to Nathaniel as the omniscient Lord, Nathaniel said, "Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel" (John 1:49). This Israelite in whom there was no guile belonged to that class of Jews of his day which waited

faithfully for the accomplishment of their national promises, that God would send them the promised Messiah-King. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Virgin-born Son of God, is that King; He came as the minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the Fathers (Rom. xv:8). Before He was born His mother, the Virgin of Nazareth, received the promise of God communicated by the angel Gabriel, that her Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit, should be a King. "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke i:32).

The promises to Israel had reached beyond their own nation; the Gentiles knew of it and therefore a caravan of learned men came from the East to Jerusalem asking directions to find "the new-born King of the Jews." John the Baptist heralded Him as the King in whose person the promised Kingdom had come nigh. Being of the seed of David He was a King, entitled to the throne, and as King He manifested Himself in royal dignity and royal power, the power of God. The signs of the promised kingdom attended Him every step of the way. The blind saw, the deaf heard, the lame leaped, the dead were raised (Isa. xxxv). Many in Israel looked to Him as the promised King. At one time a large multitude gathered together. They had decided to take Him and crown Him King. He knew their desire was but a carnal one; He knew that the nation as such would not have Him; He knew that the cross would have to come before the crown, and suffering before glory. "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain by Himself alone" (John vi:15). Because He had been promised to Israel as

King, and the Word of God foresaw that they would reject Him as King, He had to come as King with the offer of that kingdom. Scripture had to be fulfilled. Therefore when He entered so triumphantly for the last time through the gates of Jerusalem the multitudes greeted Him with a mighty shout, saying, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven and glory in the highest" (Luke xix:38). Then again it is written, "All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of an ass" (Matt. xxi:4, 5).

A few days later, and we behold the promised King, the Son of David, hanging on the cross. A few hours before He had witnessed to His Kingship. The Roman had asked Him, "Art Thou a King then?" He answered, "Thou sayest that I am a King." And Pilate said to the Jews, "Will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?" He knew that the Lord Jesus is the King. Then they mocked Him as King, put upon Him the purple robe and upon His head the crown of thorns. Thus He was presented by the Roman Governor once more. "Behold your King!" The cry came back from the howling mob of Jews, "Away with Him! Crucify Him!" Because Pilate knew He was the King, he wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." This title, then, read many of the Jews, for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city, and it was written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, "Write not the King of the Jews; but that He said, I am the King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written" (John xix:1, etc.).

He left the earth in resurrection glory without having received the Kingdom. He fills the Father's throne, waiting patiently for His own throne and for the promised kingdom. Since He returned He has not received a kingdom, nor is there now on earth a kingdom forming for Him.

But it is strange that while Scripture is so very clear on these matters that among those who profess to be Christians there should be so much ignorance and confusion. Thousands upon thousands believe that the Church is the promised Kingdom and that the Lord Jesus Christ is the King of the Church. They think that they are building up the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, by their own efforts, in Christian work and missionary activities, as well as other activities. As the process by the Gospel and the salvation of individuals seems to be too slow to some of the Modernists, who in fact do not believe in the Gospel at all, they advocate legislation and all kinds of social activities to establish the kingdom more firmly. That foolish "Inter-Church World Movement" sent forth, in its days of reckless spending of money and advertisement, promising that the kingdom would come in a day, if only enough money would come, to bring it in by "money power." What awful blindness!

The Church is not the Kingdom, nor is Christ the King of the Church. No well instructed believer who wants to conform in everything to the Word of God will call the Lord Jesus Christ "my King," for the Holy Spirit never authorizes a child of God to address Him by this title. He is our Lord. It is true in Revelation xv:3 He is called "King of the Saints," but as it has been proven long ago the correct rendering is "King of the Nations." As saved by His grace, washed in His most precious blood, accepted in Him the Beloved One, indwelt by His Spirit, joint-heirs

with Him, we are not the proper subjects of His kingdom, nor in the kingdom to be ruled over by Him. We are members of His body, we are with all His redeemed ones the espoused virgin to Christ, His bride, destined to be united with Him in the coming glory to share His glory and His Kingdom. This is our heavenly calling. When it is realized we shall be sharers of His throne and reign with Him over the earth.

In that glorious day when "He shall come to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all them that believed" (2 Thess. 1:10). He will receive the Kingdom, then the many unfulfilled promises of God's Holy and infallible Lord will be fulfilled. Let us listen to them.

In the Second Psalm, so often quoted in the New Testament, we are told of what will precede the coming of His kingdom. It will not be a converted world, nor nations awaiting Him to crown Him Lord of all, but nations raging and imagining vain things, against God and against His Christ. It is the picture of our own times. But then God exclaims: "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I will give Thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with the rod of iron, Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." For this He is waiting at the right hand of God. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at my right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of Thy strength out of Zion; rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies."

Then He will become the Prince of Peace and "of the increase of His Government and peace there shall be no

end, upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever" (Isa. ix:6, 7). And Jeremiah spoke, "Thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a man to sit upon the Throne of Israel" (Jer. xxxiii:17). Who will it be? "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice on the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is His name whereby He shall be called, *The Lord our Righteousness*" (Jer. xxiii:5, 6). David saw His day and rejoiced, so that when the Spirit of God showed to him the kingdom He should have who is his Son and his Lord, he wrote that his prayers were ended (Psa. lxxii). He had seen in holy vision that "In His days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. . . . Yea all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him."

Several centuries later Zechariah, the great post-exilic prophet, bears still the same testimony as to the King, the Prince of Peace. "He shall speak peace unto the nations, and His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river [Euphrates] even to the end of the earth" (Zech. ix:10). "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth. . . . And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles" (Zech. xiv: 9, 16). Israel will then behold Him, looking up on Him whom they pierced (Zech. xii:10). They will behold Him "the King in His beauty" (Isa. xxxiii). He, the once

despised King, will in marvellous mercy redeem the remnant of His earthly people and restore their long lost inheritance. "Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken, neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married" (Isa. lxii:4). "And righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. xi:5-9).

What folly then it is to expect the church to do all this "to bring in the kingdom" and to establish these wonderful blessings with many others we have not mentioned. Nothing of all we have quoted can be realized till that day comes when heaven opens once more and the silence of centuries is broken, when He appears whom the heavens received till the time of restitution of all things. He comes as the mighty victor upon the white horse and "He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. xix:16). Seven centuries before John beheld this vision in Patmos another one had seen the same. Daniel wrote these words, "I saw in the night visions and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given

Him dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. vii:13, 14).

And how this glorious event, this wonder of all wonders, His personal and glorious re-entrance into the world is nearing! We can almost hear His footsteps in the ever increasing signs of the times. But "our Hope" is that blessed Hope, which precedes His visible manifestation, the fulfillment of 1 Thessalonians iv:16-18. For that blessed Hope we look. We shall not be disappointed. "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come and will not tarry." "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

The Morning Star

BEAUTIFUL sight! There in the eastern sky in the early morning that brilliant star! It is the morning Star, the herald of the dawning day, the rising Sun in all his glory. Our Lord is both, the Morning Star and the Sun. At the close of the Old Testament Scriptures the coming day is announced that shall burn like an oven. The proud and the wicked shall be the stubble. In that day the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in His wings. This is His visible and glorious coming to judge the earth in righteousness, to bring peace to the nations and to establish His Kingdom. The sunrise is for Israel and the nations, the breaking of the millennial day. At the close of the New Testament His own voice is heard. "I am the root and offspring of David, the bright and Morning Star." As

soon as He announced Himself as the Morning Star there is an answer from the earth: "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come." The Spirit is the Holy Spirit dwelling on earth in the members of the body of Christ; the Bride is the body of Christ, the Church. The word "come" is addressed to Him, the Morning Star, that He who has promised to come for His own may soon come. The Morning Star is symbolical of His coming for His saints to take them home to glory.

Surely the Morning Star will rise for the night cannot last forever; the morning must come. Surely He will keep His promise, in which we hope and trust, and come for us, His waiting people. Let us watch and wait. May it be true of all His people what David expressed: "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning" (Psa. cxxx:6).

How often we have looked at the Morning Star in the eastern sky and then, with the thousands of His dear people prayed, O Lord Jesus, thou bright and Morning Star, Come! And what a day when the love-call is answered! What a sight when we see Him in all His glorious beauty! What a joy when earth's sorrows end and heaven's portals swing open!

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

"Glorified" and "Admired"

"WHEN He shall come to be glorified in His Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (for our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (2 Thess. i:10). This is a most precious statement. It tells

us of the coming glory of our Lord in that day of glory. In that day when He will be manifested in great power and glory, His glory will be visibly seen and the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. He will appear, crowned with many crowns, as the mighty victor. What His Saints have prayed for and wished will come to pass.

> "Come, then, and added to Thy many crowns,
> Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,
> Thou who alone art worthy. It was thine
> By ancient covenant, ere nature's birth;
> And Thou hast made it thine by purchase since
> And overpaid its value in Thy blood."
>
> —*Cowper*

He who was once crowned with thorns in cruel mockery of His Kingship, will be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. How great will then be His glory! In the day of His visible manifestation He will not find a subdued earth. Nations will not welcome Him as their king; but the kings of the earth under the leadership of the Beast, with their great armies will be gathered together to make war against Him (Rev. xix:19). Nor will there be a church on earth, loyal and true to Him, for when He comes again He will not find the faith on earth (Luke xviii:8). He will find an apostate church, which He will spew completely out of His mouth. Yet there will be a welcome for Him by the remnant of His earthly people Israel, waiting for Him, and rejoicingly they will greet Him with the prophetic utterance penned long ago by the Spirit of God, "Blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord." How great will then be His glory! Nations will have to acknowledge His authority; every mouth which spoke against Him will be forever silenced. Satan's power and rule will end and the rule of righteousness and peace begins.

But His greatest joy and glory in that day will be His own redeemed Saints, the many sons He brings in glory with Himself. He will have with Him "the travail of His soul" and He will be satisfied, satisfied in His mighty love, when all His own are sharers of His glory and are transformed into His image.

The Apostle Paul wrote of believers to whom he ministered, whom he nourished in the Lord, "that they are his crown and joy. For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy" (1 Thess. ii:19). In a higher sense the Saints are His glory, His joy, the crown of the Lord's rejoicing in that day.

Before that day of visible manifestation comes He will gave first gathered home His own. In the blessed hour, now so near, when He descends out of heaven with the promised shout, all who died in Christ will be raised from among the dead, and come forth with their resurrection bodies, and all the living believers will be changed, being clothed upon, without dying, with the promised glorious body. This is one of the blessed mysteries. "Behold I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump*; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality" (1 Cor. xv:51, etc.). And then the meeting! It will take place not on the earth, but when the Lord comes for His Saints, as taught in the Word of God, He does not come down to earth, but the Saints go up to meet Him in the air. (1 Thess. iv:17.) He takes His

*Not the last trumpet of Revelation.

true church away from the earth, before His visible manifestation, for several reasons.

There is coming for this poor world a day of great tribulation, followed by the wrath of God. That period with which the present age is to close will be punitive in character. How can true believers ever even be imagined in this time of trouble and judgments, when the Lord so beautifully prayed about them, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world"? The fact is, the end of the age with its judgments cannot begin as long as the true church is on earth. For His own there is no more wrath and there are no judgments. And furthermore all His own must appear before the judgment seat of Christ (the award seat), to receive the rewards, the promised crowns of life and glory, to be fully made ready for the great and glorious manifestation day, when He and all His redeemed ones will appear in glory. "And to her (the church) was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of saints." (Rev. xix:8.) While the earth will be visited by judgments and suffer as never before through Satan's power, His own are in His presence, clothed, crowned and glorified.

But what will it be "in that day" when every eye shall see Him! Heaven will then open and He will be seen first as the mighty victor and the leader of His redeemed hosts. This is wonderfully shown in the Book of Revelation (Chapter xix:11-16). Symbolically, He is seen riding the white horse denoting victorious conquest, and He is followed by the armies which are in heaven; they too ride white horses, and these heavenly armies are clothed in fine linen, white and clean. The armies are the Saints, His own, who follow in His train. What a triumphal

march that will be! It will be the most wonderful, the most glorious demonstration ever seen. And "in that day" He will be glorified and admired in all them that believed. What this all means no finite mind can fully tell. We know that all who have believed will share His glory, for he prayed "the glory Thou hast given me I have given them." It means that all will be like Him, for it is written, "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." It means that each redeemed one will reflect His glory and shine out His glory. But what more it means, we will have to wait till that day cometh, to know and to understand.

And that will be His glory. "Oh! that will be glory for Him!" Sinners saved by grace, because He paid for their redemption; sinners kept by His grace and finally glorified with Him are His crown of glory and of joy. And He will also be admired, wondered at, because He has with Him the trophies of His great work. What He has done will then be seen in visible glory and will be displayed before men on earth, before angels and demons.

May the Lord by His Spirit ever keep before our hearts and minds this coming day of His glory and our glory, of His joy and our joy, so that we, His redeemed people, may be kept rejoicing even in the days of darkness. And oh! the joy! the day is fast approaching, the day when He will come to His own and when we shall be with Him.

"Greater Than Solomon"

"BEHOLD, a greater than Solomon is here" (Matt. xii:42). The scribes and Pharisees had demanded a sign from Him. He spoke to them of Jonah and the sign

of Jonah. Then He added "a greater than Jonah is here." He mentioned the queen of the South, who came to visit Solomon, and said "Behold, a greater than Solomon is here." Nothing is said about what the scribes and Pharisees answered Him. We imagine they stood there with sneers on their lips, as they looked upon Him, who had said that foxes had holes, and birds nests, but He had not where to lay His head. They looked upon Him, the man from Galilee, whom they called the son of Joseph, the carpenter. They knew He had been brought up in Nazareth, and can there come a good thing out of Nazareth? The ignorance of the people of Nazareth was proverbial in that day. And this Nazarene said that He is greater than Solomon! How they must have sneered. Perhaps they thought He was beside Himself, as some of His friends thought He was (Mark iii:21). Certain German infidel critics have used this statement to point out that it evidenced a mind not well balanced, while others uttered worse blasphemies.

But the words which are a stumbling block to the wise; that is, those who are wise in their own conceit, to the scribes, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, are for us who believe and who know Him, words of beauty, which tell out the dignity and glory of His matchless person. When He said that He is greater than Solomon, we know that it is the truth, and we find in this claim food for our souls.

Solomon was great in many respects. We do not err when we say that in him and his kingdom, Israel had reached the climax in glory and splendor. No king ever sat on David's throne possessing such greatness as Solomon.

He possessed great wisdom. It was wisdom which he did not possess in himself, for it was *given* to him in answer to prayer; because he had cast himself on the Lord as a helpless young man, who acknowledged his ignorance and

weakness. Then when he had asked for a wise heart the Lord said, "Behold, I have done according to thy words; lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee" (1 Kings iii:12). His wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the wise men of the East, and surpassed all the wisdom of Egypt, which was then at its best. It is expressly stated that Solomon was wiser than all men, than Ethan, Heman, Chalcol and Darda (1 Kings iv:30, 31). All the nations round about heard of his great wisdom. He was a great poet, for he spake three thousand proverbs and his songs were one thousand and five. He knew and understood God's creation, for he spoke of trees, from the tall cedar of Lebanon unto the small hyssop that grows out of the wall; beasts, fowls, creeping things and fishes were known to him also (verse 33). According to an ancient book, "The Wisdom of Solomon," he had knowledge of astronomy, geology, the natures of the wild beasts, the forces of spirits, the thoughts of men, the medicinal qualities of plants and roots. Jewish tradition says that he could even converse with the wild beasts.

When therefore a great queen, the queen of Sheba, came to prove him with hard questions, Solomon satisfied her "and told her all her questions; there was not anything hid from the king, which he told her not." Then she was overwhelmed with astonishment and said, "It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it, and behold the half was not told me; thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard." Such was Solomon's great wisdom.

Far greater than Solomon is the Lord Jesus Christ. He had no need to ask for wisdom, Solomon asked for it,

for He is Wisdom personified. When Solomon penned the eighth chapter of Proverbs, he spoke by the Spirit of Him, who stood in the synagogue and said, "A greater one than Solomon is here." He is the Wisdom, set up from everlasting; who was there when the heavens were prepared. It is the Son of God, called Wisdom, who speaks thus—"I was by Him, as one brought up with Him and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him." Even as a boy He was filled with wisdom (Luke ii:40). Because He is God He was even in His humiliation omniscient. The disciples confessed it when they said "Thou knowest all things." He knew what Solomon did not know, the thoughts of men. He knew every secret, whether it was the plottings of His enemies, or the troubles of those who followed Him. He had greater wisdom than Solomon for He made known the eternal counsels of the Godhead, revealed the unseen Father in His attributes, spoke the words of eternal life, so that even His enemies confessed that never did man speak as He spoke. Ever since He spoke His words of wisdom and life, in every generation, these words have been studied, searched and explained by some of the master-minds of the human race, but they have never been exhausted; they will never be exhausted. The last word of His words of wisdom will never be spoken. Heaven and earth will pass away, but His words will never pass away.

Solomon had wisdom in God's creation, but it was a limited knowledge. The Lord Jesus Christ is greater than Solomon, because by Him and for Him were all things created. He knows the mysteries of all creation, the mysteries of the heavens above and of the depths of the earth and the sea below. While Solomon knew about the fishes, he had not the power to command a fish to carry a coin and then bring that fish to Peter's hook. Solomon probably

had wisdom about the storms, the sea and the weather (Eccles. i:6), but he could not command the wind and the sea, so that the storm was suddenly changed into a calm. While Solomon knew something about nature, the Lord Jesus had a perfect knowledge of all nature; and more than that, He had power over nature.

Solomon's greatness also consisted in riches. His riches were inherited and also given to him. He had inherited immense riches from his father David, but there was also great wealth given to him. Hiram, the king of Tyre, gave him a fortune in valuable timber and all the gold he desired. The gold amounted to six score talents, in our money about three million dollars. But in 1 Kings x:14 we read "Now, the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold," about twenty million dollars. The queen of Sheba also gave him one hundred and twenty talents of gold, besides a great store of spices and precious stones. The wealth of Solomon must have exceeded that of every contemporary monarch.

But in comparison with the Lord Jesus Christ Solomon was but a pauper.

He is greater than Solomon in His riches. The silver and gold of all the world are His. All the wealth of creation is His. As the head of the new creation, the glorified Man Christ Jesus was made by His Father the heir of all things. This includes more than the planet on which man lives, the earth. This includes more than all the riches, seen and unseen, deposited in and on the earth. It includes the universes. It includes every one of the billions of stars, every solar system, the depths of the heavens and its tenants, depths beyond the ken of the finite creature. Solomon with all his earthly riches fades into insignificance before Him who is greater than Solomon.

When Hiram and the queen of Sheba brought their presents to the feet of Solomon, it was but a faint prophetic picture of what will happen on this earth some future day. The true Solomon, the Prince of Peace, will receive, when He comes again, the throne of His father David. Then all kings will fall down before Him, all nations shall serve Him. To Him shall be given the gold of Sheba, the kings of Tarshish and all the isles shall bring presents. All nations will worship and adore Him, and all nations will call Him blessed (Psa. lxxii).

Solomon was great as a King and as a Judge. He had great glory. We let the divine record speak. "The king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind, and there were stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays. And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps; there was not the like made in any kingdom. And all king Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold, none were of silver, it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon. . . . So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom" (1 Kings x:18-23). Upon the throne he ruled in righteousness and in peace. The wisdom of God was in him to do judgment (1 Kings iii:28). "And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon (1 Kings iv:25).

But the glory of his kingdom did not last and the wise man with all his wisdom, the great king with all his glory, became the fool he had pictured in his proverbs. The glorious kingdom passed away and disaster followed upon

Solomon's sin. The promises made to David were not realized in Solomon, but will be realized in Him who, according to the flesh, is the son of David. He is greater than Solomon in His coming Kingdom and in His righteous rule as Prince of Peace over the nations of the earth.

His throne will be more glorious than Solomon's throne. While the coming King will have His throne on earth, He has also His throne in the New Jerusalem. Then will be fulfilled what is written in the last verse of the first chapter in the Gospel of John: "The angels of God will ascend and descend upon the Son of Man." While Solomon built a *wonderful house of the Lord,* He who is greater than Solomon will build a more glorious temple. "He shall build the temple of the Lord, and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne, and He shall be a priest upon His throne" (Zech. vi:13). His judgments will be greater than Solomon's. "He shall judge the people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. . . . He shall judge the poor of the people. He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. . . . In His days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth" (Psa. lxxii).

Yes, our Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, our Friend, to whom we belong, is greater than Solomon, and when the day arrives which will demonstrate all His greatness and reveal all His glory, we shall share in His glorious kingdom.

The Empty Throne

THE greatest message carried from heaven to earth is the message which the angel Gabriel brought to the Virgin of Nazareth. "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found

favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of His Father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke i:30-33.)

The promised One was born of the Virgin. His name was Jesus; He was great and was called the Son of the Highest. Every word has come true to the very letter. But what about the second half of this angelic message? Has the Lord God given to Him the throne of His Father David, does He reign over the house of Jacob now? Has He a kingdom? None of these things have come to pass. He does not sit upon the throne of David, nor does He reign over the house of Jacob, nor has He received the kingdom from God's hand.

Let us see what the Word of God has to say about that throne, the throne of David, what it has to say concerning the kingdom. The Person and work of Israel's Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, is the subject of all prophecy. The Spirit of Christ testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow (1 Peter i:11). The sufferings of Christ, the rejection of Christ, the Cross of Christ, the resurrection of Christ are blessedly pre-written in the Old Testament. Equally so the glory of Christ, His kingly throne and His Kingdom, are revealed by the prophets. The golden line of royalty is even more marked in the Holy Scriptures than the red line of His atoning work.

Melchisedec, the King of righteousness and peace, the priest of the Most High is a type of King-Messiah. So is Joseph in His exaltation. Dying Jacob spoke of Him, as the Shiloh of Judah to whom the gathering of the people

is to be. Balaam, the unwilling prophet, had to testify of Him, as the sceptre rising out of Israel, smiting the nations, that this One out of Israel shall have dominion. (Num. xxiv:17-19.) And Balaam also said, looking upon the camp of Israel, "The Lord His God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them." The Lord as King was in the midst of His people; His kingly glory dwelt in their midst. When later they demanded a king like other nations, the Lord told grieving Samuel, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them." (1 Sam. viii.)

Then He gave them a king such as they desired. Saul is the picture of the world's last king, yet to come. After that the Lord chose His king, the man after His own heart, obscure, small, despised David. And Saul persecuted God's anointed, tried to kill him, but could not touch the life of David. The conflict ends. Saul is overthrown; God's king is enthroned and rules over all Israel. After that David desired to build the Lord a house, but that night Nathan received a message from God, that He would build David a house. He makes in infinite grace a covenant with David, concerning a Son who is to have a kingdom and a throne. That promised Son is He, who came from his loins and who is His lord as well. It is Christ. David's son Solomon received the kingdom after David. He reigns in peace. He builds the house. Glory is seen on all sides; Gentiles from afar come to him. But it all ends in degradation of the king and the collapse of his famous kingdom. The reign of Solomon demonstrates two facts. It is a faint type of the reign of the true Prince of Peace, He who is greater than Solomon and the Davidic covenant was not fulfilled in Solomon; another Son of David must get the throne of his father David and the promised world-wide kingdom.

What visions the Holy Spirit gave to David concerning Him who is to have His throne and the kingdom He will get! The Spirit of God sweeps across the strings of his harp and he sings by revelation of that King and the glories of His kingdom. Listen to him! In the Second Psalm he sings of the King to be enthroned upon the holy hill of Zion, receiving the nations for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possessions. Then He sings again of Him as Son of Man, made a little lower than the angels, under whose feet all things are to be put. He describes His glorious coming with the portals of heaven swinging open (Psa. xxiv). In the Forty-fifth Psalm the King is seen to execute judgment and to receive His throne, while in the Seventy-second Psalm His great and glorious kingdom, with all nations at His feet and kings doing Him homage, is wonderfully revealed. Thus David sang in the Spirit of the king who is to fill his throne and receive the kingdom.

And the Prophets! From Isaiah to Malachi we hear their continued testimony of that coming King to fill David's throne. He is the King of Righteousness, the Prince of Peace. He will bring deliverance for Israel and regather His people. Nations will turn their swords into plowshares; He will speak peace to them. He will rule over the nations in righteousness and His glory will cover the earth, so that the whole earth will be filled with His glory. Creation itself will be blessed by the King when He occupies the promised throne. Such, and much more is the testimony of the Prophets, the holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

The promised Son of David came. The angel's message tells us that it is He who was born of the Virgin in Bethlehem. When we open therefore our New Testament we

have in the first Gospel the picture of the King. His legal title to the throne of David is established. Gentiles come from afar seeking not a Saviour, but the new-born King of the Jews. A herald announceth His coming and the nearness of His kingdom. The King appears and utters His royal proclamation in the sermon of the mount. That He is the King He manifests by His many miracles. The whole land hears the good news of the Kingdom. His messengers were not sent to the Samaritans and to the Gentiles, but only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Everywhere the kingdom message is heard, "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!" He is David's Son; the promised throne belongs to Him and His is the kingdom. And as His disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray He put as the first petition, "Thy kingdom come." What else did these Jewish disciples understand by this petition than the Kingdom of which the Prophets so fully testified. But will the nation accept Him? Is He now to have the throne? He rides into Jerusalem for the last time. They cry before Him "Hosannah to the Son of David!"—"Blessed is the King of Israel who cometh in the name of the Lord." All this was done that it might be fulfilled—"Behold, thy king cometh unto thee."

And then His rejection. What the Prophets also foresaw came to pass. No throne for Him, but the Cross! They do not want this man to reign over them. They put Him into the hands of the Gentiles. When Pilate reminds them of His Kingship they answered, "We have no King save Cæsar." And Pilate asked Him, "Art Thou a King then?" And he answered, "Thou sayest that I am a King." His own people after that demanded the release of Satan's man, Barabbas, and the crucifixion of their King. The awful choice is made. No throne for the King, the cross instead!

And after that the mockery; the platted crown, the purple robe, the frail reed, the marred visage! And all to mock His Kingship. We see Him on the cross, with the inscription which no hand could remove, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

The throne is empty, and ever since the throne has been empty, and He who alone can fill the throne is rejected. The cry of the beginning of the age, is the cry of the end of the age, "We do not want this man to reign over us!" Christ the King is no more wanted today than He was wanted when they chose Barabbas. The world does not want Him; the world hates Him!

The throne is empty. All the world's misery, its want, its horrors, sorrows, sufferings, all the disorder, chaos and every other evil has its source in the rejection of Christ. As long as that throne is empty and not occupied by the Lord Jesus Christ, earth's sorrows will continue, wars will continue; unrighteousness will rule; no permanent peace and no better world can come. The world is even now tasting the bitter fruits of its unbelief; man is reaping the sorrowful harvest of the rejection of Christ. But the empty throne will not remain empty forever. The Throne which belongs to our Lord will be filled by Him. But who will put Him on that throne? Not man. Not the Jews! Not the nations! Not even professing Christendom. But it is written, "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David." God will enthrone His blessed Son. He will come back to earth again to receive the throne and the Kingdom. He will set Him upon the holy hill of Zion; He will give Him the nations for His inheritance.

And when He fills the throne and rules with His Saints over the earth all will be changed. The night of sin and

death will be gone; the morning of glory breaks, the beginning of the Lord's day, when the nightmare of horror, anarchy, war, famine and pestilence is forever banished.

Oh! that the King might come back! It is the only Hope for the world. And with rejoicing, we His redeemed people may look forward to that day when the empty throne will be filled; for then we too shall occupy the throne with Him. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

"We Have Seen the Lord"

"WE HAVE seen the Lord" (John xx:25). Such was the joyful message of the disciples after the Lord in resurrection glory had been in their midst. The doors of that room were shut for fear of the Jews, when suddenly "Jesus came and stood in the midst and said, Peace be unto you." What joy theirs must have been when they went forth from that meeting with the testimony, "We have seen the Lord." It was not the first time that the Lord of Creation had been seen by human eyes, nor was it the last time. The manifestations of the Lord past, present and future, is an interesting theme which may be traced throughout the entire Word of God. They may be grouped in seven distinct manifestations.

1. *The manifestation in Old Testament times.* He walked in the garden and talked with Adam and his wife. He came to Abraham in the form of a creature and paid him a visit in the tent at Mamre. The Angel of Jehovah, appearing to the Patriarchs, to Moses, Joshua, Manoah and his wife, to Gideon and others was the Lord Himself. He appeared many times on earth, visiting chosen ones, mani-

festing His grace and mercy, as well as executing judgment. All these manifestations foreshadowed His incarnation and His work.

2. *His visible manifestation in Incarnation.* The Lord, the Son of God, whose name is, Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace (Isa. ix:6) took on the creature's form and walked among men. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth" (John i:14). And beautiful is that other testimony of the Holy Spirit given through the beloved disciples. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us" (1 John i:1, 2). The Creator appeared on earth in the creature's form. The true God and the eternal life was manifested among men. And He finished the great work the Father gave Him to do, when He sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

3. *His manifestation in Resurrection Glory.* He came forth from the grave and appeared to His disciples. "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this day, but some are fallen asleep. After that He was seen of James; then of all the Apostles." Thus wrote the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xv:5-7). They beheld Him after His passion and knew it was the same Lord Jesus with whom they had talked and walked during the days of His humiliation, who had been crucified and was buried. He ascended upon high, where

God gave Him glory (1 Peter i:21). Stephen saw Him in that glory. So did Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus and John in the isle of Patmos. We also who believe on Him see Him with the eyes of faith in that glory. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor" (Heb. ii:9). "Whom having not seen, ye love, in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter i:8). We know that He liveth in the highest glory. We enjoy His fellowship, we feel His power and His love in our lives. He heareth and answereth our prayers.

4. *The coming manifestation to His Redeemed.* "Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John iii:2). "We shall see Him as He is" this is the blessed, glorious goal of every Christian. To this we look forward; for this we long and pray. Nothing thrills the believer's heart so much as this promise, "We shall see Him as He is." What a sight it will be, when all the Saints of God are caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air! What a meeting that will be! And what a blessed, glorious moment when we shall gaze in His face for the first time. Face to face with Him who died for us, whose grace kept us and whose power brought us into the Father's house. And when we shall see Him we shall be like Him, "conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren" (Rom. viii:29). What a precious, blessed Hope is ours!

5. *His visible and glorious manifestation to execute judgment and to receive the kingdom.* His own will meet Him in the air and will be led by Him into the Father's house.

We shall see Him in a way as the world can never behold Him. But it is also written, "Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen" (Rev. i:7). Such a visible coming He promised Himself (Matt. xxiv:29, 30). "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud sat one like unto the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle" (Rev. xiv:14). Startling will it be when a world which rejected Him seeth Him coming back to earth again, crowned with many crowns. Israel will see Him then and own Him as Messiah and King. Their house will no longer be left desolate. Then He will smite the earth with judgment and rule the nations with a rod of iron, while His power transforms this earth and righteousness reigns.

6. *His manifestation during the coming age.* With His second, visible and glorious coming a new age begins for the earth and those who dwell on the earth. The Church is no longer on earth but is with Him in the heavenly Jerusalem above the earth. But nations are on the earth as well as His people Israel. Jerusalem will be the capital of His world-wide kingdom, the city of a great king. The manifestation of Himself and His glory will take place during that age when He is enthroned as King. Jerusalem and Mount Zion will be covered by His visible glory. He will be seen in His glory by human eyes. "Thine eyes shall see the king in His beauty" (Isa. xxxiii:17). The angels of God will ascend and descend upon the Son of Man (John i:51). The nations shall go up from year to year to Jerusalem to worship the king, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles (Zech. xiv:16). "Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him, all nations shall serve Him"

(Psa. lxxii:11). It seems at a stated time the King of Glory will appear in Jerusalem to receive the worship and homage of the Kings of the earth. His throne will be established upon the earth and over the earth. He shall reign and we with Him.

7. *An eternal Vision.* Forever with the Lord. "And they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads" (Rev. xxii:4). The fellowship of the Saints on earth is with the Lord Jesus Christ and this fellowship into which God hath called us will never end. We shall see His face from eternity to eternity. We shall be forever with Him, forever like Him, forever receiving the surpassing riches of God's kindness, forever sharing all He has and He possesses.

Thus He will be seen by all His creatures. The Redeemed of all ages will see Him in Glory. His enemies will see the Lord, every knee must bow and every tongue confess (Phil ii:10, 11). The nations of the earth will see Him; Israel will behold Him and look upon Him whom they pierced. The unsaved, the lost, will see Him when He occupies the great white throne. His coming is what this poor world needs. May we His people pray daily "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Ours is the first vision promised.

"O blessed hour! when all the earth,
Its rightful heir shall yet receive;
When every tongue shall own His worth
And all creation cease to grieve.

Thou, dearest Saviour! Thou alone
Canst give Thy weary people rest;
And, Lord, till Thou art on the throne,
This groaning earth can ne'er be blest."

The Revelation of the Lord from Heaven

IT IS a solemn and a blessed message the Holy Spirit sent to the suffering Christians in Thessalonica to comfort and cheer their hearts. In the second epistle the Apostle sent to them we find that message: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (2 Thess. 1:7-10).

Here we have the solemn announcement that the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven. It will be "in that day." This is the day which God's prophets in olden times saw in their visions and so often mentioned in their inspired messages. It is the day on which the long silent heavens will break their silence, when He who was on earth, who died and rose from the dead and who fills now the throne of God, will be manifested once more. It is a far different event from that which the Holy Spirit describes in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians. There also He bears witness to the coming of our Lord. What we find in that grand and solitary revelation given to console the sorrowing hearts of the Thessalonians precedes the visible and glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus from heaven. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in

clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv:17, 18). These are familiar words. But we do not err if we remind ourselves of them again and again. What is promised in this blessed revelation will also be fulfilled. And how often we forget these words, or mourn over the fact that while we know them, we lack the reality and power of this wonderful destiny Grace has bestowed upon us. The Lord Himself will descend from heaven to call His beloved saints to gather to Him. He will meet us in heaven's appointed meeting place; not somewhere on this earth, but in the air. We shall meet Him and see Him in His Glory. Nothing is said in connection with this blessed event, the coming of the Lord for His saints, of angels with flaming fire. Not a word is written in this message of the homegoing of His redeemed people, of vengeance and judgment. All we read in this precious statement is, that He comes Himself, that together with the risen saints we shall be caught up in the clouds, that we shall meet the Lord in the air and be forever with Him.

Before the visible manifestation of the Lord Jesus as the righteous Judge over this earth can take place, He must have called His own to Himself. It is after this wonderful, indescribable event has occurred, and after the days of appointed tribulation, so fully pictured in the last book of the Bible, that the glorious manifestation of the Lord Jesus will come. This "Apokalupsis," unveiling of the Lord Jesus in His glory, and what is connected with it, is described in the verses we have quoted from Paul's Second Epistle to the Thessalonians. Three things stand out prominently:

1. *The revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with His mighty angels.* This will be the most startling occurrence in the history of the human race. It will be far greater

than His first Coming. Then the angel of the Lord appeared over the field of Bethlehem and the Glory of the Lord shone about them, while the multitude of the heavenly host praised God and uttered their great message. He was not seen in person; the angel but announced that He had taken on the creature's form. When He is revealed from heaven He will come in person, "this same Jesus" (Acts i:11); "in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. xxiv:30). A darkened sun will add to this wonderful sight, when the Son of Man is thus revealed. Not just a few shepherds will behold the glory of the Lord, but He will be seen in all His majesty and glory by every eye. "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him" (Rev. i:7). "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle" (Rev. xiv:14); "His eyes as a flame of fire and on His head many crowns" (Rev. xix:12). His mighty angels will be with Him. Angels are to be seen again. They were associated with Him while He was on earth. They ministered unto Him (Mark i:23); an angel came to Him in Gethsemane (Luke xxii:43); they were present at His resurrection and His ascension. But the larger manifestation of the angels comes with His visible revelation from heaven. His mighty and holy angels will be with Him. They will attend His triumphal return as worshippers (Heb. i:6; Psalm xcvii:7). They will execute His judgments (Matt. xiii:39-41; xxiv:31). What a glorious sight that will be when these marvellous tenants of heaven appear!

2. *The execution of the vengeance of God and punishment of the ungodly.* This will be one of the purposes of His manifestation. While the redeemed have rest those

who troubled them will now be dealt with by the Lord. The statement, "and to you who are troubled rest with us," does not mean that only then when He is manifested believers will enter into rest. The Saints receive their complete deliverance and rest when He comes with the shout and we are caught up to meet Him. "In that day we shall be at rest while the wicked will find themselves in tribulation. The Lord will manifest against them His retributive justice. This change of condition is not mentioned as though it were only accomplished at the Lord's appearing; but the words by which it is expressed show what will be the respective condition of saints and unbelievers at that moment." Those who will be punished are described. Two classes are mentioned. Those who know not God and those that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The first class includes all who refused the knowledge of God and lived on in sin, while the second class are those who heard the Gospel preached and rejected the Gospel. In disobedience they turned their backs upon the greatest message God ever gave to this world. One hears often the hope mentioned that people living now who hear the Gospel and do not accept it, will have another chance to believe during the great tribulation period. But there is no Scripture for such a hope. 2 Thessalonians ii:10, 11 is against it. The mass of people who reject the Gospel and harden their hearts will ere long be hardened and follow the delusion of the Man of Sin.

What a judgment it will be when He comes! It is the person of Christ whom they reject, and now the rejected One, whom they would not, appears in all His glory. Every mouth will then be stopped. All the arguments about Him will be ended and they must face Him, through whom God spoke once to their hearts in love, and now He speaks

to them in His wrath. What a terror will strike the ungodly, the deniers and rejecters of His Gospel, His person and His blood, when they behold Him!

3. *The Glory of Christ as revealed in His Saints.* God brings with Him all His beloved, redeemed people. He brings His many sons in glory. He will be the leader of the redeemed host. All the Saints will follow Him in this great manifestation. Each will reflect His own glory. The holy union and close identification which exists between Him and those for whom He died, a union which we now contemplate in faith, will then be outwardly demonstrated. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. iii:4). His word He spoke once in the Father's presence will then be seen accomplished. "The glory which Thou hast given me I have given them" (John xvii:21). The great masterpiece of God accomplished in His Son will then be displayed in all its marvellous beauty and glory. Every Saint will be conformed to the image of the Firstborn among many brethren. Glory beyond description, and even our present comprehension, will cover the Saints of God in that day. And that will be glory to Him! He will be glorified in it all, and will be admired in all them that believed. What a spectacle it will be to the inhabitants of the world! What bitterness it will add to the eternal loss and shame of those who neglected so great salvation!

And dear reader, what a powerful incentive this coming revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven ought to be in our lives! If such is our destiny to appear as the co-heirs of our Lord, clothed with our glory, what manner of men and women we should be! Daily we should pray that the Holy Spirit may keep this truth before our hearts and make

it a power in our daily lives. Then we shall be lifted above the turmoil and confusion of the darkening days in which our lot is cast. If we keep this blessed truth of the Coming of our Lord constantly in mind, it certainly will keep us. And what an incentive to service. All about us are those who know not God and who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. They are hastening on to an awful doom. May we pray for them and increase our efforts to reach some of those who know Him not.

And oh! the longing of hearts today that all that is written concerning His Coming may soon be fulfilled.

"Lord Jesus, come!
Let ev'ry knee bow down,
And ev'ry tongue to Thee confess,
The Lord of all, come forth to bless
Lord Jesus, come!

"Spirit and Bride,
With longing voice, say, 'Come';
Yea, Lord, Thy word from that bright home
Is, 'Surely, I will quickly come!'
E'en so, Lord, come."

The Man at the Right Hand

"LET thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the Son of Man whom thou madest strong for thyself" (Psa. lxxx:17). This is a prayer of a suffering people, who are fed with the bread of tears, who drink tears in great measure (verse 5). They cry to Him "that dwelleth between the Cherubim" (verse 1). They pray, "Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved." It is the prayer of a God-fearing rem-

nant of the Jewish people during the final great tribulation through which they pass, before their history of tears and sorrow is ended, and their history of glory begins. And they expect their help and deliverance through One who is at God's right hand, the Son of Man, whom God has exalted. Only through that Man at the right hand can come salvation and deliverance.

At Ephrath dying Rachel called her son "Ben-oni," which means "Son of suffering." But the father called him "Benjamin," which means translated, "son of the right hand" (Gen. xxxv:18). It is a beautiful type of Him who was born in Bethlehem Ephratah, the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, the son of suffering. But after He was rejected by His own, after His suffering and death, the Father raised Him from the dead, exalted Him, placed Him at His right hand, gave Him all power in heaven and on earth. He is now the Man at the right hand. Prophetically, the One-hundred-and-tenth Psalm speaks of this: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." The rejected One is enthroned in the highest heaven and occupies the very throne of God. How abundantly the New Testament bears this witness. Our Lord quoted this prophecy before the Pharisees and applies it to Himself (Matt. xxii:41). The Holy Spirit made use of it on the day of Pentecost through Peter. "For David is not ascended into the heavens, but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts ii:34-36). In the Epistle to the Hebrews we find it again mentioned (Heb. i:13; x:12).

And this exalted One, the Man, who was here, who suffered and died for our sins, who now fills the throne and occupies the position of glory and authority, is the salvation and help of His people. From Him cometh our help, our strength, our joy and peace. Apart from Him we are nothing and can do nothing. We must learn daily to look away from ourselves, from man, from earthly circumstances and conditions, and look to Him at the right hand of God. The life which is lived thus, which never loses sight of the exalted One and depends on Him, is a life of power and bears the blessed fruit of righteousness. Is not this the need of all of us? We need keeping, strength and power in the midst of increasing darkness. We need to be kept in perfect peace and calmness. All and every other need is supplied in Him who is at the right hand. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed upon thee, for he trusteth in thee" (Isa. xxvi:3). All our need is supplied by God according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Phil. iv:19). This constant reminding God's beloved people to look to an exalted Christ, the Man at the right hand, He who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, was Paul's great testimony. He knew the need of this. He exhorted the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord and added "to write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe" (Phil. iii:1).

But He who is at the right hand of God will not occupy that place forever. The Father's throne is not His permanent place. He must receive His own throne to which He is entitled. Therefore we read in Psalm cx that He will be there at the right hand up to the time when His enemies are made His footstool. When the hour strikes in God's purpose, when His enemies are to be humbled in the dust and He is to receive the promised kingdom, He will leave

His place at the right hand of God. Of this Hebrews x:11, 12 speaks. "But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth waiting till His enemies be made His footstool."

The Second Psalm describes our Lord as He looks upon the earth and beholds the nations banded together, hating Him and His laws. "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." This open revolt happens at the close of the present age. The nations which had the Gospel and rejected that Gospel, the nations we called "Christian nations," and who were engaged in the awful conflict, will take this God-defying attitude. What a testimony to the real character of this present age! And what does He do who sitteth in the heavens? "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision" (Psalm ii:4). He witnesses all in silence. But suddenly the scene will change. "Then" when His enemies revolt, "then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure." He will arise and execute the wrath and vengeance of God. He will appear in person to judge the nations and the world in righteousness.

"God hath appointed a day, with which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts xvii:31). Then He comes and answers the despairing cry of the remnant of His earthly, Jewish people and delivers them out of the great tribulation and from all their enemies. Then will they know that the "Benoni," the once rejected Christ, whom they nailed to the cross, is the "Benjamin," the Son of the right hand, their Deliverer and Lord.

But before He is manifested as the mighty victor over Satan and all His enemies, before He comes to claim His throne and His world-wide kingdom, He calls to Himself His redeemed to meet Him first of all in the sky. He leaves the place at the right hand to welcome and to receive His own dear people for whom He died and whom He kept by His priestly ministrations at the right hand of God. Before He acts in judgment upon His enemies, this glorious event will take place.

And well it is to remember these familiar truths and not to lose sight of them a single day. The accomplishment of all these things hastens in our day. Let us lean more than ever upon the everlasting arms, let us look to Him for help and all we need, to Him, who is at the right hand. And looking to Him, let us look for Him to call us to Himself.

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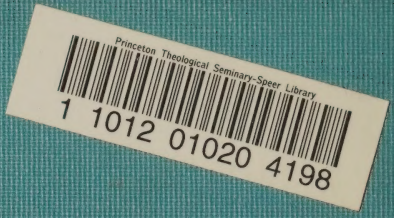
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